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NEW STATESMAN

Czechoslovakia
The black future

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The freedom of the press

'FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION constitutes one of the essential foundations of a democratic society . . . it is applicable not only to information or ideas that are favourably received or regarded as inoffensive or as a matter of indifference, but also to those that offend, shock or disturb. . . ' The words are from the judgment in which the European Court of Human Rights decided that the House of Lords was wrong to suppress the results of a *Sunday Times* inquiry into the causes of the thalidomide disaster. A majority of the Court's judges took the view that Britain's law of contempt of court was in fundamental breach of the European Convention on Human Rights, to which Britain is a signatory.

The judgment re-inforces doubts about whether Britain still possesses the 'essential foundations' of a democratic society – insofar as they consist in the possession of a national press which is capable of providing worthwhile information about the issues of the day. The truth is that in our national newspaper system it is thought acceptable behaviour to regurgitate official party propoganda practically unaltered, and present it as original journalism (see page 630). It is thought acceptable to report a major racial confrontation, in which there is serious evidence of police violence, *essentially from police headquarters* (see page 624). It is thought perfectly respectable to report the delusions of the tyre-salesman and ex-policeman Robert Mark (Labour's relationship with the unions is similar to the mechanism which brought Hitler to power) as if they were offered by some statesman of European history. Survey research all too often finds that British electors are misinformed and confused about any issues other than the very simplest: the wonder is, not that this should be so, but that it is not worse.

WE HAVE JUST passed through an election campaign in which most people did not have the chance to read a tolerably worthwhile newspaper, and in which two of the small number which do aspire to such a description – *The Times*, and the *Sunday Times* – remained wholly immobilised by the decision of their proprietors. Of course, the proprietors and their spokesman do not put it like that. To Mr William Rees-Mogg the *Times* lockout is a venture undertaken in defence of the 'freedom of the press': a description he applies even to attempt, as nasty as it was unsuccessful, to sidestep both the British and the German unions, and produce what amounted to a blackleg edition of *The Times*. The fact that Rees-Mogg, the servant of a rich and increasingly ruthless North American conglomerate, can use such words without being drowned in hearty laughter demonstrates the absurdity of our definitions of press liberty.

It is not, and never has been, the unions which have posed the threat to freedom of expression. The National Graphical Association have made no attempt to modify the words and thoughts which the proprietors and editors of *The Times* wish to insert in their paper. Nor did the German unions try to do so. All they said was: we shall not allow you to lower the cost of expressing yourselves by attacking the livelihood of our members. Print what you like, but pay the rate.

The spokesman of capitalist liberty can have no reply to this – for they have always excluded economic terms from their own equations. Anyone who has a few million pounds is free, as they see it, to set up a national newspaper, and there is no compulsion on him or her to run it along commercial lines, provided there is money available from elsewhere to underwrite the propoganda effort. If those who can't be bothered to raise a few million to express themselves suffer no loss of liberty, then neither do those who have the money but can't be bothered to make proper arrangements with their workers.

Britain now needs to dismantle the legal structure of restraint and secrecy which regularly inhibits the discussion of serious issues – for no press, however owned, will grow to adulthood in such conditions. Yet we need at the same time to regulate the market within which newspapers have to fight for survival: it is not 'free competition' when oil companies are allowed to impose wholesale distortions upon the economic system of the press. We need, of course, to lower the cost of newspaper production, for unless that is done, new owners and new forms of ownership will not appear. But that cannot be done while the print unions are on the defensive: and they cannot be other than defensive as long as corporate power is allowed to treat the liberty of expression as a property right.

NOTES

Whitehall on the Tory tax plan

Patrick Wintour writes: There is now official confirmation that the Tories' plan to switch from direct to indirect taxation (a move also advocated by the Liberals) which would make the poor poorer and the rich richer. A confidential minute, produced by an official in the Department of Health and Social Security on 24 April, was passed to the NEW STATESMAN this week. Based on the still-unpublished 1977 Family Expenditure Survey, the minute states: 'It is clear that a shift from income tax to commodity taxation would help the rich and hurt the poor'. Criticising current discussions on the subject as 'rather ill-informed', the author explains that the purpose of the paper is 'to present empirical results on the actual distribution of commodity taxation and to compare this with the existing tax system'. With a series of detailed tables, the paper goes on to explain precisely how the poor would be hurt:

> The poorest ten per cent of households pay, at present, considerably more tax on their expenditure than on their income and this is true even if subsidies are taken into account. This occurs even though on average the commodity tax payment by households is lower than the income tax payment and occurs because the income tax system through its allocation of tax-free allowances prevents the very poor from paying tax. In contrast the income tax payment of the richest 20 per cent of households is nearly double their commodity tax payment . . . over 10 per cent of the income tax burden before subsidies is borne by the poorest 20 per cent of households compared with only 3.8 per cent of the income tax burden and 4.7 per cent of National Insurance contribution.

Merely comparing the amount of tax paid by different households only tells part of the story, the minute continues:

> An additional £1 in tax has a greater effect on a pensioner earning only £30 per week than it does on a millionaire. So to measure the progressivity or otherwise, of a system of taxation it is useful to compare the tax payament of each household with its disposable income. A tax could be said to be progressive if the proportion of disposable income of the poorer households which is paid in tax is lower than that of richer households. On this measure commodity taxation as it exisited in 1977 was regressive.

The poorest ten per cent paid 19 per cent of their disposable income in commodity tax while the richest 20 per cent paid only 15 per cent. But the minute points out that the subsidies for commodity tax, especially rent and rate rebates, were highly progressive and had the effect of making the overall commodity system progressive. However, it remains less progressive than the income tax system. The richest 20 per cent pay 25.3 per cent of their disposable income in income tax and the poorest 10 per cent only 4.6 per cent. By comparison, commodity tax *after* subsidies accounts for 8 per cent of the disposable income of the poorest ten per cent but only 13.9 per cent of that of the richest 20 per cent. Nevertheless, the minute says that it is the comparison between income tax and commodity tax before subsidies which is most relevant: 'because it is umlikely that an increase in direct taxation will be marked by a corresponding increase in subsidies'.

Strikingly, the minute concludes: 'It is the pensioner and one parent families, many of whom pay no income tax, but who do purchase taxed goods who would lose most.' Square that with the Tories' assertion in the *Right Approach to the Economy*: 'We believe that a switch towards expenditure taxes can be effected without creating injustice.'

Scotswood's fight

Alan Curtis writes: The workers at Vickers have occupied the heavy engineering plant in Scotswood, Newcastle, locked out the management and begun an indefinite work-in as part of their long and imaginative campaign (NS 23 February) to stop the closure of the plant. Already 200 of the 700 workers have been made redundant and last Saturday the management sent out another 100 notices for redundancy to take effect at the end of May. This appears to have been the final straw for the shop stewards. Previous to that they had only been blacking the removal of finished goods from the plant including an order for a dynamometer to China worth more than £5m. They are furious at the management's reluctance to consider keeping the plant open for another 12 months while alternative products, suggested by a team of academics and shop stewards, are considered.

At the only tripartite meeting that has occured between government, employees and management, held on 2 April, the Government offered management substantial subsidies in the form of short time working compensation to keep the plant alive while the alternatives were considered. The meeting was arranged before the election was called but took place after Callaghan had lost the confidence vote in Parliament. The prospect of an imminent Conservative Government appears to have made the management less conciliatory towards the stewards. The campaign of the Vickers workers seemed to have been exhausted but this occupation and the support it has received from other Vickers' plants on Tyneside shows that the battle is far from over.

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THE MORNING AFTER THE VOTE BEFORE
(from THE LAST JUDGEMENT by MICHELANGELO done with the aid of SILICONE CHIPS)
a fear of unemployment, lack of law + order and (in LACK OF Arts Council Grant — The DETAIL SHOWS ONE MAN'S FIRST VIEW OF HELL
NOTE: Be it on your own head that bare-footed drunks can be seen falling even further into the abyss of their own material self-interest!
GA
Stanley Wells

NOTES

Seen it all before?

Christopher Hird writes: Important developments in the mysterious world of science and technology always produce one or two excited flutters in the City of London and microprocessors are proving no exception. Within the last month the share price of Brocks Group has risen by a half on the expectation and then confirmation of the company's takeover of two small companies involved in microelectronics. Brocks are paying some £1.6 million in shares for a concern founded only a few years ago, which expects to make profits of just £100,000 this year and which has virtually no assets. When most companies are valued at around only seven times pre-tax profits, this seems an expensive buy.

The companies belong to Mr Colin Banks and make their money by acting as representatives for the US owned Rockwell company, selling their microprocessors in this country, and designing and selling products – such as taxi meters – which use the chips. Mr Banks expects his company to make profits of £500,000 in 1980, mainly as a result of such work in which he has invested a modest £250,000.

Mr Banks is no stranger to the City. In 1969 he floated a company, Kode International, which designed and sold computer peripheral equipment: a most fashionable thing to do at the time which ensured a very high valuation for Mr Banks' company, despite the absence of almost any assets. Profits for 1969 were expected to be £325,000 and, spurred on by Mr Banks' talk of new contracts under negotiation and new products in the pipeline, there was press speculation that profits could be twice that in 1970.

However, investors who paid 130p for each Kode share in May 1970 were disappointed: just over a year later shares were worth less than 25p. In 1970 the company lost £215,000, and it was six years before the heady hopes of 1969 turned into reality. Over-optimistic forecasts of sales, and weak management had taken their toll and Mr Banks made way for a new managing director before leaving the company in 1974.

Mr Banks is confident that the same will not happen to the companies which he has persuaded Brocks to buy and into which Brocks will be pouring something like £350,000 a year for new development. Mr Banks waxes lyrical about the huge market for the products he is developing and his company's ability to keep a stream of new products flowing, even though the market is, he admits, going to be more competitive in future.

Who takes the rap for police assault?

John Clare writes: Can the Commissioner for the Metropolitan Police, Sir David McNee, be held responsible in law if unidentified members of his force beat up coloured people during a riot? This interesting and topical question was explored by His Honour Judge Ruttle in Westminster County Court last week – just three days after the events in Southall. In the case before him a young black civil servant, Mr Errol Francis (supported by the National Council for Civil Liberties) was claiming damages for assault against the Commissioner, as the person apparently responsible for the actions of the Metropolitan Police. Mr Francis alleged that during the riot at the Notting Hill carnival in August 1976 he had been beaten with a truncheon by an unidentified policeman whom he had just photographed attacking a young Asian girl. He said the policeman had also damaged his camera and destroyed his film.

Mr Laurence Marshall, for the Commissioner, denied that Mr Francis had been assaulted and claimed that even if he had been the Commissioner could not be held responsible for the consequences. Mr Marshall added that the Metropolitan Police only took this line when the allegation was made against an *unidentified* officer. Judge Ruttle dismissed Mr Francis's allegation of assault but nevertheless went on to examine the question of the Commissioner's responsibility because, he said, it had been argued before him in great detail. He pointed out that according to the 1964 Police Act the legal relationship between chief constables and their officers is the same as that between master and servant. So the question was whether the (now theoretical) assault was done by the policeman in the course of his employment: was it the wrongful way of carrying out an authorised act? If it was, the master would be responsible.

Judge Ruttle said that what the policeman was authorised to do was to keep the peace, prevent the commission of crime and apprehend offenders. But what he was alleged to have done was turn on an innocent law-abiding citizen who was taking photographs as he was perfectly entitled to do. In fact, the judge said, by attacking the citizen the policeman had committed a crime when his duty was to prevent it; he had flagrantly breached the peace when his duty was to keep it. Thus it followed – with unimpeachable logic – that the policeman was not authorised to do what he did and was acting quite outside the scope of his authority. Therefore the Commissioner could not be liable. The same logic leads one to conclude that the more violently an unidentified policeman behaves during a riot in Southall or anywhere else the less likely is the

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hapless citizen to have any legal remedy. The moral of the story is: get his number.

Mulley goes to Florida

Denys Blakeway writes: Insufficient attention has been paid to the recent meeting of the NATO Nuclear Planning Group at Homestead, Florida. The meeting was, however, one of the most important in NATO's history in its discussion of methods of countering the Soviet nuclear dominance of possible European theatres of war. Britain's Defence Minister, Fred Mulley, considered it necessary to break off his election campaign for four days in order to attend.

Although the meeting was held in the greatest secrecy it is possible to conclude that a commitment to modernisation and renewal of NATO's theatre nuclear force was made. A communique states that, in view of the Soviet nuclear build-up 'it would be necessary to maintain and modernise theatre nuclear forces'. This in turn confirms Britain's commitment to replace its obsolete Vulcan bombers and short range missiles (the present means of theatre nuclear defence) with some form of nuclear weapon better able to meet the Soviet threat. Polaris is ruled out because of its use as a strategic weapon aimed at Soviet cities (it too is soon to be obsolete) and the neutron bomb has caused too much political opposition to be considered. The most likely contender is the American cruise missile (or a British development of the same weapon); Britain is perfectly positioned for the launching of this extremely accurate weapon. Given that Mulley joined with other western ministers in their commitment to renewal and modernisation it is only to be expected that Britain – with its traditional role as the USA's land based aircraft carrier – will either develop or purchase this weapon. As a cruise missile can be used for both theatre and strategic purposes the sensitive question of a replacement for Polaris may well be effectively dodged, and any possible embarrassment for the Labour Party neatly sidestepped.

Transported sideways

Mick Hamer writes: In an apparent attempt to improve the now sadly tarnished image of the Department of Transport, the Freight Directorate — which is responsible for juggernauts — has lost both its chief, Joe Peeler, who has been moved to a less sensitive job, and the task of administering rail freight grants, which is now to be the responsibility of the Railways Directorate.

Joe Peeler's eleven month stay at the Freight Directorate was marked by controversy. First, an internal minute he had written, advocating heavier lorries, was leaked. Then, in an after-dinner speech not only did he repeat this heresy but he also claimed that nationalisation of road haulage would not be 'in the public interest'.

Publication of Joe Peeler's pro-lorry minute also caused doubts to be expressed about the Freight Directorate's suitability to be in charge of dispensing rail freight grants when it is quite so keen on rail freight's main competitor — the juggernaut. Responsibility for these grants has now been moved away from the Directorate. Enthusiasm for roads, however, remains in the Department still. Ron Bridle, the Under secretary who — as Chief Highway Engineer in the Department — is the moving force behind the country's motorway builders, is standing for election to the Council of the Institution of Civil Engineers (one of the professional bodies representing motorway builders). Among his objectives, if elected, is the desire for 'better contact with influential sources in government, the civil service and industry to ensure that on issues affecting the membership and society at large professional skills and opinions are brought to bear.' He should have little trouble.

RACE RELATIONS
Elaine Potter and Francis Wheen

How Asians became truncheon-fodder in Southall

The not-so-thin blue line

UNTIL 5.30 on the afternoon of Monday 23 April, Kevin O'Lone was attending a chapel meeting at the *Daily Mirror* discuss new technology. Shortly afterwards he and a colleague set out for Southall to cover the National Front meeting for their newspaper. They did not arrive until about 7.30, and at 7.40 Mr O'Lone began filing his story.

From O'Lone's vantage point behind police lines at Southall town hall, to which he had been refused entry by National Front stewards, he saw very little. Neither Mr O'Lone nor his colleague witnessed any of the police brutality which occurred during last Monday's upheavals, which explains why the *Daily Mirror* concluded its report the following day by saying that 'no serious injuries were reported among the demonstrators.'

Colin Bell of the *Daily Express* arrived in Southall at 5 pm – four hours after the demonstration started. 'It was a hard situation for one person to cover,' he says. 'There were four separate fronts. I was going from one to another checking with police press officers.' Back at the *Express* office John McCormick was getting another police version from Scotland Yard.

Meanwhile the *Sun* and the *Daily Mail* were busily assembling the 'facts' in their own inimitable way. The *Sun* carried the headline ANTI-FRONT RIOTERS BESIEGE INJURED OFFICERS IN WARD, and informed its readers that

> Demonstrators even besieged the hospital where injured officers were being treated . . . They picketed the infirmary and began screaming abuse at officers in the casualty department.

The *Sun* says that they received this news from Scotland Yard, but the press office at the Yard deny issuing any story about the 'siege'; what they did tell the *Sun* was that a *peaceful* demonstration had taken place *outside* the hospital. Even this is not supported by a hospital spokesman, who told the NEW STATESMAN that hospital staff saw no demonstrators.

The *Daily Mail* also wheeled out the hospital story, as well as the following information: 'Police noted . . . the high proportion of addresses from outside the Southall area given by those detained.' However, out of more than three hundred arrested, only two live outside the area. Peter Burdon, who masterminded the *Mail* story from the safety of Scotland Yard, explains that there is a huge difference between those detained for questioning and those arrested and charged: 'You might detain all sorts of people you don't charge.' Burden obtained his information by reading off the names and addresses of those being questioned from the tickertape at the Yard. He gleaned some rather interesting information from the tape. 'The high proportion of Asian names surprised people. I was surprised, the police were surprised. It is very, very unusual to suddenly have a tremendous number of Asian names in the detention lists.' The fact that Southall is a predominantly Asian area seems to have quite slipped by Mr Burden.

The police clearly mounted a highly efficient information-gathering operation. Mr Burden of the *Mail* informed us that the Special Branch and the uniformed branch worked as one. When questioned further about the Special Branch he said laughingly: 'Forget the Special Branch. Talk of official records.' Mr Burden was most impressed by the flow of police information from Southall to the Yard: 'A remarkable system of public flow of information. The flow of information from the Yard was very low-key and factual. Very impartial. I thought we might get a pro-police view but it was supported by the facts from the ground. Facts are facts. They tell themselves. At the end of the day by their standards the police had underplayed it.'

PRESS AND POLITICIANS alike thus relied largely on a single source for their stories – the police, and particularly the Metropolitan Police Commissioner Sir David McNee. While Southall was still in a state of distressed upheaval, Sir David issued a statement: 'The disturbances,' he said, 'were provoked acts of violence against police and property by groups of people determined to create an atmosphere of tension and hostility . . . Police have no part to play in the political arena but have a bounden duty to see that the laws of the land pertaining to free speech are enforced.' It was also Sir David who, through the Home Secretary, provided the Prime Minister with the information for his statement that extremists had gone into Southall from outside to foment trouble against the police.

Sir David McNee's speedily produced public relations handout, so readily reproduced the following day by politicians, press and television, has probably embittered the Southall community just as much as what actually happened there last week. For the truth is that every one of Sir David's statements is – to put it at its politest – open to question.

The performance of the police last week is a central issue in the story. There is a disturbing consensus in Southall that the police were a major source of provocation, both by their general attitudes to the predominantly Indian demonstrators and by the brutal methods they chose to adopt to contain the protest.

McNee's suggestion that 'outside' agitators provoked violence – a claim unquestioningly endorsed by Callaghan – is also bitterly resented. Partly because it is not true – the vast majority of demonstrators were Southall residents – and partly because it is irrelevant. When National Front members come from outside Southall to attend a meeting, that's 'democracy'. When thousands of police are drafted in from other areas, they are 'safeguarding democracy'. When a few anti-racists travel to Southall, they are 'threatening democracy'.

SIR DAVID MCNEE'S suggestion that last

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Monday's disturbances were 'unprovoked' and that the police were simply enforcing the 'laws of the land pertaining to free speech' deserves examination. The decision to allow the National Front meeting to take place in Southall was perhaps the first serious provocative act. According to Beatrice Howard, the Conservative leader of Ealing Council, the dicision was a 'routine administrative matter' for the returning officer under the Representation of the People Act.

When word leaked out that the National Front had been given a public platform in Southall, Michael Elliot, leader of the minority Labour group on Ealing Council, together with Syd Bidwell, the sitting MP, Vishnu Sharma, President of the Southall Indian Workers' Association, and Martyn Grubb, local Community Relations Officer, joined to protest against the decision. Mrs Howard would not budge, despite the fact that the council were bound by a decision not to allow use of the hall to the Front. She saw no reason to take legal advice or to call a special council meeting to ratify this change of council policy. Neighbouring Brent Council, chaired by lawyer John Lebor, took the trouble to obtain counsel's opinion and to hold a special meeting of the policy and resources committee before deciding to refuse the National Front a meeting place in their area. They concluded, Mr Lebor explains, that under the Representation of the People Act 'you are supposed to grant a hall for a meeting where the public are admitted. From our knowledge of other National Front meetings, we knew the public were excluded. We concluded that National Front meetings were therefore not *bona fide* election meetings.'

At the National Front meeting in Southall only five members of the 'public' were allowed in; the police delegated all authority to vet the public to Front stewards. Mrs Howard's response is that 'it *was* an open meeting because the press was there'. If the *Daily Mirror* reporter was refused entry, 'it must have been for his own good'.

In the week before the meeting, anxious to prevent the disorder which would inevitably occur, Martyn Grubb and Syd Bidwell took their case directly to the Home Secretary. He, however, expressed himself as confident that the police would take 'appropriate measures' to ensure public order and prevent breaches of the peace.

NOT FOR THE first time in his career, Merlyn Rees was wrong. Measures were certainly taken last Monday but their 'appropriateness' is debatable. At about 1 pm a small group of 60 Southall Youth Movement members began to move from their office towards the town hall. Before they had gone 200 yards the police made their first arrests.

By the time the Youth Members reached the town hall their numbers had swelled to about 300 and the police, now thought to number about 200, started 'shoving us around' according to Sunil Sinha, a Youth Movement leader. He and the Movement's general secretary, Valraj Purewal, ran to the police station to speak to the community liaison officer, Inspector Derek Goffe, whom they knew well. According to Mr Sinha, they told Inspector Goffe that they merely wished to stand in a single line in front of the hall. 'He said OK. We ran back to the hall, and told the policeman there we'd been given permission to stand in a single line. He said, "Who the fuck is Goffe?" '

Camera Press

The police, equipped with riot shields from the outset, had by early afternoon completely sealed off the centre of the town from the growing numbers of demonstrators. The isolation of one group of demonstrators from another — an important police tactic — was secured by the massive show of police force, with mounted police, police dogs and a helicopter whirring ominously overhead all adding to the tension of the day.

Some demonstrators were forced back to Southall Bridge, where they sat down: they were promptly arrested. Elsewhere, Valraj Purewal of the Southall Youth Movement began to lead a peaceful march of another group to the town hall. As people started to link arms and move forward they saw smoke bombs and flames — probably hurled by demonstrators — followed by charging horses making their way through the police cordon. According to those who were there, police then started lashing out violently and indiscriminately, pursuing their terrified quarries into Park View Road, a cul de sac. Some of the demonstrators were throwing stones. Others ran deeper into the cul de sac and escaped into 6 Park View Road, the office of People's Unity, which was being used as a first aid centre and — since 5 pm, when police closed down the Southall Rights offices — as the legal advice centre. The police stormed the house, arresting everyone inside. One of the doctors, Dr Annie Nahmed, who was hit on the head with a truncheon while tending a patient, needed six stitches.

By now many demonstrators were sandwiched between lines of police. There is conflicting evidence as to whether police were still letting demonstrators into the tight cordons at this stage, but there is absolute agreement that they were not allowing people out. Some people had been stuck there for hours, hemmed between dense ranks of police.

At about half past seven, shortly before the National Front meeting was due to begin, violence began in the Broadway, one of the streets leading to the town hall. Bottles, stones and a single molotov cocktail were thrown, and the Special Patrol Group went into action. They drove their vans into the crowds; at the last moment the doors would open and groups of police with riot shields and truncheons would swoop before retreating into their vans again.

The police then decided to clear the streets of people outside the cordons, with the most ferocious baton charges of the day. One witness, a South African scientist living in Southall, who had managed to get out of the cordon just as a baton charge was beginning, was forced to retreat into a side street to escape the truncheons: 'I saw a white schoolgirl, probably between about 13 and 16, standing by an alleyway. She might or might not have been part of the demonstration, I just don't know, but she was set upon by a policeman, knocked down, and again beaten with the truncheon while she was on the ground. The policeman then left her, to pursue another individual. I crossed the road to help her up. She was quite seriously hurt, she was crying, she had bruising running across her nose, she complained of her head and arm. It is the first time in my experience in Britain that I have felt that the tactics of the police were to intimidate.'

FOR OTHER BLACK people, however, the feeling is not an uncommon one. To suggest, as the press has done in the past week, that Asians in Southall are normally peaceful and worry-free, may sound like a compliment but is actually a subtle way of exculpating government and police from their share of the blame for the failures of British race relations. Asians in Southall have always been well-organised (helped by the fact that Sikhs have a long history of defending themselves against persecution), and since the long summer of 1976 – when the murder of Gurdip Singh Chaggar caused the fascist John Kingsley Read to remark 'One down, one million to go' – their mood has become increasingly militant. It is not difficult to see why.

When the Institute of Race Relations recently published its evidence to the Royal Commission on Criminal Procedure, it called the booklet *Police Against Black People*. It contains a battery of documented cases which show that the police do not police *for* the black community (they are, for example, notoriously unwilling to investigate racial attacks, let alone to prosecute those responsible) but actively police *against* it – through overmanning of black events such as the Notting Hill Carnival, through raiding black clubs and meeting places, and through harassment of black communities by 'flying squads' from the Special Patrol Group and the Illegal Immigration Intelligence Unit. Most notorious of all is police harassment of West Indian youths by the use of 'sus' (Section 4 of the Vagrancy Act): all that is required for a 'sus' conviction is the evidence of two police officers that the accused was acting in a suspicious manner, and in the eyes of most magistrates the very fact of the arrest shows that the police must have suspected the accused of some-

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thing; therefore he was acting suspiciously. Convictions are almost automatic.

The police have recognised for years that they are not trusted by the black community: as long ago as 1962 the Royal Commission on the Police revealed that many police felt that 'coloured people had grown more resentful of them recently'. Five years later Sir Joseph Simpson, then Metropolitan Police Commissioner, spoke of the 'deteriorating background to the pattern of police and immigrant relations during the last six months'. Fourteen more years have passed, and what has been done? Various officers have been packed off on trips to the Indian sub-continent and the Caribbean to try to fathom the workings of the black mind, but more would have been learnt simply by listening to the grievances of Asians or West Indians on the police's own doorstep.

Current police thinking was expressed by Supt Lawrence Roach in last September's issue of *Police Studies*:

> Although these immigrants come largely from Commonwealth countries, their cultural background and social structure differed significantly from the indigenous community and they did not readily recognise or accept the traditional English view of the police.

In reality, it is not 'social structure' which forms the immigrant's initial view of the police, but the historical fact that the police's role in the colonies was that of an occupying force. As the Institute of Race Relations argue, 'to continue that same policing tradition in the black ghettos of our inner cities is not to win black people over to the "traditional English view" of the police but to confirm them in their traditional view of the English police – as a police against the people'. In police eyes, black people are not part of the whole community but a race apart, with clearly defined boundaries (hence all the talk of 'outsiders') who do not fall within the general concept of police accountability – which assumes an organic link between police and public – which assumes an organic link between police and public – but must instead be 'liaised' with through the community relations structure. Police continue to see the 'problem' as being located within the black communities rather than in the force itself.

By placing all responsibility with one specific policeman, the community liaison officer, the force is thus absolved of any *general* responsibility. This line of thought continues to be official policy in the force, despite the fact that it was perceptively demolished over three years ago by Inspector Graham Marsden, writing in *Police:*

> The human problems of prejudice, sensitivity and social awareness arise at the point where the police meet the public. They occur at constable and sergeant level. The West Indian immigrant does not have a problem with the superintendent in his office – his problem is with the policeman on the High Street; and the policeman on the High Street will not have been to police college.

As Ben Whitaker argues in his new book, *The Police in Society*, it is no use confining 'wider perspectives' to a few senior ranks on courses at Bramshill Police College: '90 per cent of policemen never see inside the police colleges; yet the British service is based not on an élite, but on the authority and responsibility of each police officer.' Whitaker is, however, wrong on one point: the British police force is currently based on precisely such an élite.

Constables and sergeants are the poor bloody infantry, expected to do or die at the behest of their seniors, but never allowed to reason why. In such circumstances it is not surprising that they react as they did at Southall. 'Who the fuck is Goffe?' is a phrase that should be emblazoned on the screen every time a senior police officer goes on television to explain how 'concerned' the force is to 'foster a sense of understanding' with the black community. Will the police lession be learnt from Southall? On past form, it seems unlikely in the extreme.

Police against Black People available from Institute of Race Relations, 247 Pentonville Road, London N1. 95p.
The Police in Society, Ben Whitaker. Eyre & Methuen £9.95.

CIVIL LIBERTY
Jeremy Smith

Should the police have more power, or less?

Ways of making you talk

THE DEADLINE FOR submitting written evidence to the Royal Commission on Criminal Procedure has now passed – and the battle lines are clearly drawn. So far, the work of the Commission has attracted little public attention. Perhaps this is because the issues are seen as narrow and technical, but if so, this is a great mistake, since there are basic constitutional issues at stake. At the heart of the matter is the power of the police, both in the street (power to stop, search and arrest) and at the police station (including interrogation of suspects, the right of silence and the length of detention in police custody). The amount of power invested in the police, the way in which it is exercised and the extent to which it is democratically controlled, will determine, to a large extent, the kind of society we live in.

Pressure from two opposing sources led to the Commission being established just over a year ago. On one hand, senior police officers, notably Sir Robert Mark and Sir David McNee, have wanted to tip the balance of criminal investigation in favour of the police, and have justified this by citing increased crime rates and the alleged sophistication of many criminals. They have had backing from many senior judges, including public utterances from the last three Lord Chief Justices (Goddard, Parker and Widgery). And their views have found favour with the Criminal Law Revision Committee, whose 11th Report, published in 1972, recommended wide-ranging changes in criminal procedure, including the virtual abandonment of the suspect's historic 'right of silence'. (Its publication met considerable opposition from most of the legal profession and from the civil liberties lobby, and its recommendations have not been implemented.)

Camera Press

From the other direction have come increasing reports of illegitimate police methods, including abuse of powers of search and arrest, and of the invention of oral admissions of guilt ('verbals') as well as the extraction by force of written 'confessions'. These came to a head in the much-publicised Confait case, in which three youths were convicted of arson and murder, then freed on appeal. The inquiry of Sir Henry Fisher, which followed, found that the investigating officers had broken several of the 'judges' rules' (which are supposed to provide a code of conduct for the police when they are interrogating suspects); and that one youth had 'confessed' to a murder he could not possibly have committed. Fisher recommended that evidence obtained in breach of the rules should more often be excluded; that the rules should be tightened; and that the suspect's right to have a solicitor present during questioning should be enforced more strictly.

Though the police wanted more power, they did not welcome the idea of a Royal Commission in the wake of the Confait case. According to the Police Superintendents' Association of England and Wales, the announcement was 'greeted by police officers nationwide with almost universal pessimism':

> The fears of the Police Service are that only the police and, on track record, a minority of the legal profession, will speak for law and order in the enforcement sense. On the other side will be ranged the big guns of every minority group and sociological agency – many with doubtful motives – propounding the theory of a violent and unfeeling Police Service whose only aim is to inconvenience, or convict, as many innocent persons as possible.

However, the police were not content to go on to the defensive. The most prominent hawk among them, Sir David McNee, Commissioner of Metropolitan Police, set out in his evidence what he called his 'philosophy':

> In the past, the police . . . have been dealing with a population which, in the main, was ignorant of its civil rights. Because Parliament had become very reluctant to face up to the necessity of giving the police adequate powers to deal with crime, officers have been expected to rely upon this ignorance when making the necessary inquiries and tests for the solving of crime. The judiciary have accepted this position.

The effect of this alleged lack of power, said McNee, was that 'many police officers have, early in their careers, learned to use methods bordering on trickery and stealth in their

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The argument for electrifying our railways, will become clearer in time.

The fact that electric trains can run on any source of energy (coal, nuclear, gas or oil) may seem irrelevant at the present time.

Why argue for more railway electrification when Britain is awash in North Sea Oil?

Quite simply, because electrification takes time as well as money.

And by the time we have electrified the main arteries of our national rail system, oil everywhere will be in short supply.

The 1977 report of the Workshop on Alternative Energy Strategies, sponsored by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, concluded that "the supply of oil will fail to meet increasing demand before the year 2000, most probably between 1985 and 1995."

A Government paper, published last year by the Advisory Council on Energy Conservation, came to much the same conclusion.

So Britain has got to develop a national transport system that doesn't depend on oil.

Railway electrification now, means we can keep going in the future.

British Rail
The backbone of the nation

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investigations . . . society must also realise that it is not right to expect police to obtain the necessary powers by stealth and force. All the necessary powers must be clearly within the law.' In other words, we should not criticise the police when they 'have' to break the law, but amend the law to suit their purposes.

McNee is not simply asking for the removal of anomalies. He wants, among other things, the following new powers for the police:

- To stop, search and detain people and vehicles in public places for articles which may cause injury or damage to people or property.
- To seize property found in a public place believed to be of evidential value.
- To search people and possessions in a public place if by reason of a person's presence in that place, an officer believes the search may assist in the prevention of serious crime or danger to the public.
- To set up a road block if it may prove a fruitful source of the discovery or prevention of criminal offences.
- To apply to a judge for an order that everyone in a particular area should be compulsorily fingerprinted.
- To search the residence and place of business of anyone arrested for an offence carrying a possible prison sentence.

Carried away, no doubt, by the grand scale of these proposals, the Commissioner commits a glorious Freudian slip: 'As with so many powers which the police possess it would be exercised with restraint only if it was felt that the particular circumstances justified it . . .' McNee believes that once suspects have been taken to the police station, the police should be able to hold them there for 72 hours, then for a further three days (with extensions beyond that) on the authority of a magistrate; and that suspects should have no right to argue against this. He wants to remove the right of silence by enabling the court to interpret silence as an admission of guilt. He opposes the idea of tape-recording police questioning of suspects.

The Police Superintendents take a more sophisticated line:

> The police . . . have been able to operate with limited powers and in limited numbers, because family and community standards were such that the law was enforced informally. There was almost a contract between parent and Police, between teacher and Police . . . Consequently, a decline in the influence of the family and other sociological changes have brought pressures on the Police quite unforeseen when most of the current procedures were laid down.

From this premise they justify a number of increased powers, though more limited than McNee. They, too, want to end the right of silence, but they oppose any 'arbitrary' time limit on holding suspects before charge: clearly, their view is that the status quo works well enough for the police. In contrast to McNee, they maintain that the 'Police Service in this country governs (sic) by the consensus and consent of the public at large' and that 'the Police should not seek powers which would alienate the general public'.

The judicial response to the Commission has been sparse. Judge Mervyn Griffith-Jones, one of the Old Bailey regulars, recommends removing the right to silence but considers the position needs tightening up to help the police themselves:

> Juries are becoming more and more unwilling to accept Police evidence of interviews wherever – as so often happens – allegations of 'verbals', however far-fetched, are made by a defendant. So bad has the position become that where the prosecution can produce other reasonably good evidence of the defendant's guilt, I sometimes feel that they would be more likely to obtain a conviction by omitting . . . the evidence of a confession.

He recommends the use of tape-recordings or contemporaneous notes of interviews. (Interestingly, the Prosecuting Solicitors' Society are of much the same view. They additionally advocate defence solicitiors having a real right of access, though this must be seen in the light of their proposal that the right of silence should go.) Judge Pickles also wants an end to the right of silence which, he says most aptly, comes from 'quieter times'; he too would like tape and video-recordings of interviews.

On the other side are those individuals and organisations who no doubt comprise, in the police view of things, the vociferous minority of whom the Commission should beware, and who have in common the desire to provide safeguards for those on the receiving end of contemporary policing methods. They include the National Council for Civil Liberties, the Legal Action Group, the Society of Labour Lawyers, the Haldane Society of Socialist Lawyers, the Law Centres' Working Group, the British Legal Association, the Society of Liberal Lawyers, a number of constituency Labour Parties, the National Youth Bureau, the Institute for Race Relations, the Runnymede Trust, a number of church organisations, the Criminal Bar Association, NACRO, the National Association of Probation Officers, old Uncle Mike Zander and all. No doubt these are among the orchestrators of what James Anderton, Chief Constable of Greater Manchester, has lately so engagingly described as a 'simple, insidiously dangerous and damaging campaign against the police'.

On this side, there is common agreement that in substantial numbers of cases the police abuse their powers and fabricate evidence; and that suspects need to be protected far more effectively than at present. The judges' rules are ineffective and should have 'teeth' put into them. The right of silence should be preserved and a maximum period fixed after which police must bring an arrested person before a court. There is less agreement on precisely how the suspect's position should be safeguarded; and on the maximum period of pre-charge detention.

The NCCL, for example, suggests that the police should be able to hold a suspect for four hours, subject to application to a magistrate for a further 12 hours and to a judge for another 12 hours, making a 28-hour maximum. The Law Centres' Working Group suggests four hours, after which the suspect should be given written reasons for being held further, up to a maximum of 24 hours before charge. The Criminal Bar Association recommends a straightforward 48 hours as the maximum. Most proposals from this side would make 24-hour duty solicitor schemes necessary, and would also entail magistrates' courts being ready to sit on a daily basis, including weekends. The prize for suggesting the longest maximum pre-charge detention (subject to McNee's proposal for indefinite extensions) goes to Judge Pickles, who thinks two weeks is the right period. He describes the NCCL as 'a body which does necessary work', presumably in protecting the public from the likes of himself.

ANOTHER ISSUE that divides the 'civil liberty' groups in their evidence is the tape recording of police questioning. The NCCL refers to the possibility of suspects being 'softened up' before the recording session: they, the Legal Action Group and others conclude that a solicitor must be present when all questioning takes place, without which evidence or confessions should not be admissible. Other groups take the view that tape recording alone would suffice as a safeguard, although there are warning words from Professor Smythe of Durham University, a former CID officer:

> At present the police are perfectly capable of 'preparing' a defendant for his court appearance. Do not imagine they will have any difficulty in preparing him for his tape-recording session!

In spite of general police opposition to tape-recording, there is in fact an experiment due to start very shortly for the benefit of the Commission.

Possibly the toughest issue for the Commission to tackle is the right of silence. The 'abolitionists' follow Bentham in claiming that 'innocence claims the right of speaking, as guilt invokes the privilege of silence'. The Criminal Bar Association call the right of silence 'the concrete and visible assertion of the fundamental principle that the prosecution must prove their case and that no obligation lies on an accused person to prove his innocence'. It is also, they say, the citizen's basic safeguard against misuse of powers by investigating officials. Others point to the fact that those being questioned are often in a state of shock and fear, that they may be asked about events that took place weeks or months ago, and that pressure to talk under such circumstances would increase the risk of false 'confessions'.

Although the Commissions' main task is to look closely at police powers, it will be impossible for them to ignore the wider question of what type of policing we are to have. The evidence of Sir David McNee and to some extent that of other police officers, implies that policing by consent is no longer possible; and that more powers are therefore necessary, backed up by increasingly comprehensive records and up-to-date technology. The Sussex Joint Branch of the Police Federation want us all to have identity cards with thumbprints and photos attached, and the police to have power to detain anybody 'not at his place of abode' until satisfied as to his identity. Even McNee does not go that far, but there is a general tendency in the Sussex direction. Such a process is difficult to reverse, since the use of powers such as those demanded by McNee and others would be likely to increase public mistrust and lead, in turn, to calls for even greater powers.

An alternative solution has been called 'community policing': this involves building strong working links with the local community, rather than acting as an occupying army in the fashion of the Special Patrol Group. For this option to work, the police would need to accept that in the long run they are likely to get more public trust and support – and therefore more access to information – if they accept the limitations on their powers. Regrettably, there is no hint of self-questioning in any of the police evidence to the Commission. More typical is the majestic certainty of the Chief Police Officers, who assert without qualification that: 'No further safeguard to the rights of suspects need be given.'

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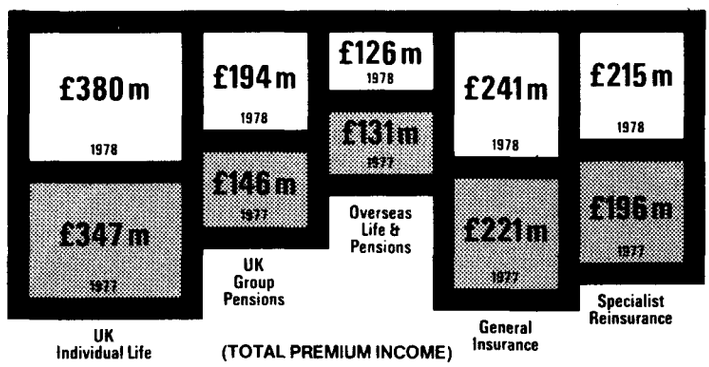
From business built on these foundations we shall continue to grow.

PRUDENTIAL CORPORATION



Points from the Chairman's statement.

The Group's results are presented for the first time as those of the Prudential Corporation Limited, which became the holding company of the Group on 29th December 1978. On this date your shareholdings in The Prudential Assurance Company Limited became shareholdings in Prudential Corporation Limited. The holding company's operating subsidiaries are Prudential Assurance, Mercantile and General Reinsurance, Vanbrugh Life and L'Escaut. All other companies within the Group are subsidiaries of one or other of these operating companies.

Encouraging out-turn

The Group's profit for the year, at £41.2m, is 29% higher than that of the previous year, and the net dividend, at 8.0p, is 18% higher. When one takes into account the difficulties experienced in a number of areas last year, this out-turn is encouraging, suggesting that the current level of the Group's business is capable of generating a usefully higher level of profit.

The profits from life business were £17.2m, despite a non-recurring loss of £2.4m in Vanbrugh Life, the Group's unit- linked assurance subsidiary. The profit from the life branches of Prudential Assurance, from Prudential Pensions, Prudential South Africa and Mercantile and General all showed a good increase.

General underwriting results suffered from a deterioration in the motor and public liability accounts. Rates in both cases have been increased. Underwriting losses on our domestic property account were reduced, but remain high, and measures are in hand to improve matters. Elsewhere the picture was better. The net profit from general business was 56% higher at £16.2m. Much of this improvement resulted from better results at M & G Reinsurance. The overseas general business of Prudential Assurance again showed an underwriting profit.

Expansion overseas

We have taken two fresh opportunities for expansion. In 1978 the Prudential Assurance Company acquired the capital of Constellation Life, a Canadian company which has shown rapid growth in its specialist area of accident and health insurance. In April this year we began to write life business on behalf of Prudential Assurance in Holland.

Non-executive Directors

Earlier this year the Government asked for the views of interested parties on amendments to the Companies Bill which would make it compulsory for larger companies to have at least three non-executive directors. We think it very desirable that wider use should be made of non-executives. They can bring to a board valuable experience in fields outside the acquaintance of the executives, and act as a safeguard against parochialism. Being in a position to take an independent view of the executives' policies and performance gives their role general importance. We are, however, of the opinion that it would be inappropriate to legislate on this subject in the manner which has been suggested. It is not the non-executive quality which is important, but the quality of independence.

It is impossible to compel unwilling companies to appoint non-executives with the required independent cast of mind. Unless boards recognise that the change would be of help to them, the compulsory addition of a few non-executives would achieve little.

We regard it as important that the benefits of the wider use of independent non-executive directors should be more generally accepted, and it is our intention to make our views known to companies in which we invest.

Occupational Pensions

The new State earnings-related pension scheme is still in its infancy, yet there is already talk of further changes.

The Occupational Pensions Board have important remits on hand in relation to solvency of schemes and protection of pension rights for employees who change jobs. In addition there have been suggestions regarding the provision of more information to members about their schemes and the principle of equal status for men and women.

We are in sympathy with many of the objectives, but we sincerely hope that, in the interests of all concerned, any new requirements will be kept as simple as possible. Ease of understanding by members is not the least important consideration.

PRUDENTIAL CORPORATION

A copy of the full statement is available from Prudential Corporation Limited, 142 Holborn Bars, London EC1N 2NH.

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THE PRESS 1
Paul Foot

The election was a field day for proprietorial interference

It depends which facts are sacred

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE started his new political paper *Watchdog* nearly 200 years ago with a solemn warning: 'In an Enslaved State, the Rulers form and supply the opinions of the people.' He went on to denounce 'the weekly provincial newspapers, the editors of which receive the Treasury prints gratis and in some instances with particular paragraphs marked for insertion. . . .'

The habit has been spreading ever since. On 25 April, Conservative Central Office issued to the press a statement by Angus Maude, who is chairman of the Conservative Research Department. It was headed 'LABOUR'S LIES'. It listed 12 'lies' which had been uttered by Labour spokesmen during the campaign.

The enormity of these 'lies' can be assessed by the one attributed to Mr John Silkin, Minister of Agriculture. He had said that the Tories intend 'to devalue the Green Pound to parity'. The Tory manifesto says:

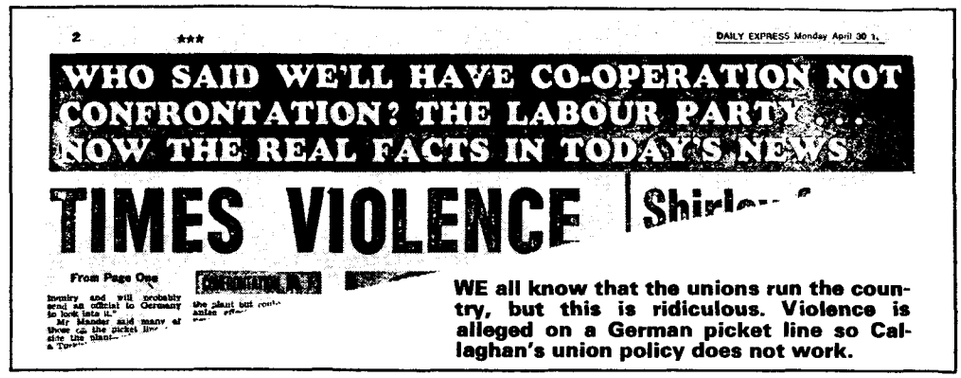
> We will, in particular, aim to devalue the Green Pound within the normal lifetime of a Parliament to a point which would enable our producers to compete on level terms with those of the Community.

The few journalists who could spot Mr Silkin's 'lie' were inclined to write off the Tory press release as run-of-the-mill party hackery.

In the offices of the *Daily Mail* that evening, the press release caused a sensation. The entire front page of the following day's paper was cleared for a 'news item' entitled: LABOUR'S DIRTY DOZEN. The 12 lies of the Tory Party's press release were reproduced (in slightly different order) with the 'truth' helpfully attached. It was, the *Mail* concluded, a 'devastating exposure'.

More people read newspapers in this country than anywhere else in the world. The British people have, as they are constantly being reminded, the widest choice of daily newspaper. The newspapers, it is agreed, jockey with one another in a free market. This is the essence of the freedom of the press. How curious it is, then, that in the middle of all this jockeying and all this freedom, nine million of the daily newspapers circulating every day support the Tory Party, and only about three million support the Labour Party.

This heavy bias to the Right does not come about by democratic decision or by choice. It is dictated by the proprietors. A few years ago the Newspaper Proprietors' Association changed its name to the Newspaper Publishers' Association. Its spokesmen explained that the 'old-fashioned, busybody proprietor' is a thing of the past. In fact, they are still there, as dedicated as ever to making money from their newspapers, and from a lot more besides. Victor Matthews is proprietor of the Express group, which is owned by his huge property and shipping empire, Trafalgar House Investments. He has an office in the *Daily Express* building from which he supervises editorial matter 'with a firm hand'. Lord Rothermere has been forced to live in Paris because of the very high rates of tax on multi-millionaires. He, too, keeps a watchful eye on the newspapers in his Associated Newspapers group (which owns a juicy slice of North Sea oil). Lord Hartwell is still 'editor-in-chief' of the *Daily* and *Sunday Telegraph*, which he owns. Rupert Murdoch has come a long way from the Oxford University Labour Club. He has to supervise an enormous international communications combine, and spends a lot of time in New York. But he manages to keep a close watch on his two British golden geese – the *News of the World* and the *Sun*.


2 ★★★ DAILY EXPRESS Monday April 30 1979

WHO SAID WE'LL HAVE CO-OPERATION NOT CONFRONTATION? THE LABOUR PARTY . . . NOW THE REAL FACTS IN TODAY'S NEWS

TIMES VIOLENCE

Shirley ...

From Page One

WE all know that the unions run the country, but this is ridiculous. Violence is alleged on a German picket line so Callaghan's union policy does not work.

All newspapers are hierarchies. Proprietors appoint editors, who appoint night editors and news editors, who appoint chief reporters and chief sub-editors and so on down. Advice, initiative, political judgment – all must come exclusively from the top down. As in all hierarchies, the atmosphere encourages the hack and the sycophant. Woe betide the journalist, however respected by readers or colleagues, who dares to baulk the hierarchy.

In 1970, an up-and-coming columnist called Bernard Levin was sacked by the *Daily Mail* because he argued in his column for the return of a Labour government. At the same time a poll among *Daily Mail* journalists revealed a substantial majority of Labour voters. At the start of this year's campaign, Jeremy Campbell, the *Evening Standard*'s well-established American correspondent, was ordered to find out the views of American politicians and businessmen about the British election. He found them out, and wrote his piece. In the first edition of the *Standard* it was headed: WHY CARTER WANTS JIM TO WIN. Most of the people Campbell spoke to had been not altogether flattering about Mrs Thatcher. In later editions, the headline was changed to AN IDIOTIC TAX – AN AMERICAN VIEW. All the anti-Thatcher remarks were excised. The whole article was gutted and transformed into a summary of American businessmen's views about the British tax system. The Tory bias, in other words, had eaten away at the findings of the paper's most secure and independent commentator.

In the same way, editors themselves are free to do nothing at all of which their proprietors disapprove. Before the election campaign there was a discussion between Derek Jameson, editor of the *Daily Express*, who calls himself 'a labour man', Peter Grimsditch, editor of the *Express*'s new sister-paper the *Star* and Victor Matthews, proprietor. Jameson and Grimsditch were very keen, on strictly commercial grounds, that the *Star* should campaign for Labour. They pointed out that the *Star*'s chief rival, the *Sun*, was hell-bent on the Tories, and that a Labour line might win some working class readers for the *Star*. But Matthews, whose worship of Mrs Thatcher knows no bounds, couldn't stomach the prospect of owning a Labour paper: the *Star* was allowed to 'float' in the middle of the road, where, predictably, it was run down.

'COMMENT IS FREE – but facts are sacred.' This is the well-worn platitude which greets any criticism of the Tory bias in our newspapers. Comment, after all, is recognisable as comment. It is always headed 'Opinion' or 'We Say' or 'What We Think'. Readers can judge for themselves whether the argument in these 'comment' columns is specious or not. But facts are sacred. Editors, journalists and even proprietors are bound by their duty to report the news objectively.

Let us see how this worked during the election campaign. On 18 April, at a Labour Party press conference, Roy Hattersley, Prices Minister, explained his plans to give more powers to the Prices Commission to investigate firms who make high profits. These plans were reported in the *Daily Mail* under the heading: SNOOP OF THE CENTURY. The article started:

> An extraordinary Labour threat to investigate the secrets of Saatchi and Saatchi, the public relations firm which is masterminding Mrs Thatcher's election propaganda campaign, was revealed last night.

The article went on the suggest, that the proposals for new Price Commission powers were inspired by pique among Labour Ministers at 'the send-up and satire campaigns that the small firm has mounted over the past year to ridicule Labour in TV and poster advertising'. The article was written by Gordon Grieg, the *Mail*'s veteran political editor. Mr Grieg knew perfectly well that Saatchi and Saatchi could be investigated under Labour's proposed powers only because of its very high rate of profits. He is a serious political observer (indeed he used to vote Labour, and probably still does). He doesn't even begin to believe that Labour Ministers would propose new price controls out of resentment for one small ad agency. So why does he select this 'fact' as the prominent one in his story? Because he knows that something has to be done to ridicule Labour's proposals to reduce prices.

A more blatant example still has been the red-baiting of the Labour Left which has been sustained throughout the campaign by all four Tory newspapers. All the political correspondents and observers know perfectly well that, in confidence and in numbers, in Parliament and outside, the Labour Left has seldom been weaker. Its influence on the Labour manifesto, for instance, was negligible. Yet they are obliged to 'report' the opposite. They have to find 'facts' – perhaps in Newham, perhaps

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How the column inches were used

The major objection to the bias of the British press is that it claims not to be in the business of propaganda, but to provide an objective and balanced account of what goes on. During the election campaign we have monitored the political complexion of the column inches in the tabloids, up to and including 1 May.

There is clearly some subjectivity in judging bias though like the elephant, it is easy enough to spot, if hard to describe. Generally, where complimentary adjectives and phrases have been used – 'Labour's proud record', 'well handled by the government' – or sympathetic interviews reproduced, we have judged the piece 'pro'. Similarly, 'anti' coverage has been identified by descriptions such as 'Mrs Thatcher's Fools' Gold policy', 'bumbling Jim'. Where long reports – such as on the manifesto, or economic news – have included pro or anti comment, only these parts have been allocated to those headings: the rest has gone as 'neutral'.

Even if our calculations overestimate the pro-Tory anti-Labour coverage by 10 per cent, this still outstrips the pro-Labour, anti-Tory *and* neutral coverage together by a good margin.

	Sun	Mail	Express	Mirror	Total column inches
Pro-Tory	282	332	234	—	848
Anti-Tory	—	—	—	325	325
Pro-Labour	41	—	23	221	285
Anti-Labour	429	514	302	—	1245
Neutral	222	276	185	171	854

Research: Denys Blakeway

Proprietor Matthews (left) over-ruled editors Jameson and Grimsditch

in Croydon – to establish the absurd view that James Callaghan is a slave of the Marxists.

A fine result of this fact-hunt was the front page of the *Daily Express* on Tuesday. The mighty headline screamed: JIM'S SECRET PURGE. The central 'fact' of the story was that Callaghan had ordered a 'purge' of Left-wingers in the Labour Party. This was described as 'a major election climb-down', a last-minute recognition by Callaghan of the influence of the reds under his bed which the papers had been warning him about for so long. But what sort of purge was it to be? Who was to undertake it? What, for instance, was to be the role of the Labour Party National Executive in the purge? Whose, in short, was the evidence that such a purge had been ordered? Who had been told about it? Who could be quoted about it, even anonymously? Not a single shred of evidence was adduced for this 'report'. Yet it was produced as a sacred fact.

It is rare that readers tend to 'allow off' for bias in obviously political stories, especially at election times. More sinister is the bias in news stories which don't seem immediately relevant to the election. Stories about lawlessness, anarchy or promiscuity, for instance, can be presented all on their own, without an overt reference to the Tory plans for more 'law and order'. The lawless Left in full riot is a good story, as the Tory papers found after the events at Southall. (see p.624) But a law-abiding and peaceful Left are no story at all. As a *Daily Mail* photographer said to Tariq Ali a week later as 10,000 people marched peacefully through Southall in memory of Blair Peach: 'Come on Tariq. You won't get a picture in the *Daily Mail* on Monday unless there's some violence!' And, of course, there wasn't one.

Three days before polling day came the news that publication of the weekly *Times* had been held up by German trade unionists. This was manna from heaven to the Tory papers. 'GAGGED!' shrieked the *Express* front page. The 'Times Violence' story was carried over onto page two, with a headline which made an interesting breach between sacred facts and free comment. WHO SAID WE'LL HAVE CO-OPERATION, NOT CONFRONTATION. THE LABOUR PARTY . . . NOW THE REAL FACTS IN TODAY'S NEWS. The not altogether irrelevant fact that *The Times* events took place in Germany, where the British Labour government has no jurisdiction was carefully relegated.

Another way of conveying the atmosphere of lawlessness is to call top policemen and judges to aid. I doubt whether there has ever been a general election in which so many neutral law-enforcers have made themselves available to the Tory cause.

The *Daily Mail* led its paper with what it called an EXCLUSIVE. The 'story' was that Sir Robert Mark, former Police Commissioner, had written an article in the *Security Gazette*, an obscure trade paper. The article attacked socialism and the trade union immunities at law. Despite its strong language, it would have vanished into obscurity had not the *Daily Mail* chosen to blazon it all over its front page.

On Friday, 20 April, the Police Federation bought space in most newspapers for an advertisement entitled Law and Order. It called for more pay for the police, severer penalties for criminals and more powers for juvenile courts. Mr James Jardine, the Federation's chairman, said on television that the ads were not political, and forgot to mention that Tory Party policy is for more pay for the police, severer penalties for criminals and more power for juvenile courts.

On Saturday, 22 April, Law and Order got another boost – this time from Lord Denning, the Master of the Rolls. DENNING RAPS UNION POWER yelled the *Express* front page. Denning had made a speech in Western Ontario in which he said that the unions were too strong. On that same morning that his speech was hysterically reported in the Tory Press, Margaret Thatcher devoted her press conference to 'trade union reform – my theme for the day'. What a coincidence! On his return to Britain, Denning apologised for any political effect his remarks may have had. He is only a judge and he cannot possibly be expected to know that there is an election on, nor to anticipate that his reactionary remarks will be fully 'reported' in a reactionary press.

Facts, in short, may be sacred, but everything depends on which ones you choose to sanctify. The Tory bias in the press is not confined to comment. It penetrates deep into every area of the newspaper, into news, reviews, even sport, and it infects the mind of every reporter, every sub-editor and every copy-taster. In Britain, perhaps more than anywhere else in the world, it is unchecked by even a pretence at objectivity or fairness.

There is one set of people who will not and cannot complain: the Labour Renegades. Suddenly a large number of tired and discredited gentlemen who have taken the familiar road from youthful conviction to middle-aged reaction are in great demand. Paul Johnson, whose polemical skills so infuriated the rich in the 1950s and 1960s, has been writing on

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their behalf in the *Daily Mail*. He was also a contributor to the *Sun*'s WHY LABOUR LEFT ME series, which has featured a lot of old favourites: Prentice, Chalfont, Mayhew, Wyatt.

But the prize for diligent repentance must go to Lord George-Brown. His 'exclusive' column in the *Star* on Fridays has, with great regrets, been advising Labour supporters to vote Tory. Labour, he explains, has 'lost the ideals of Keir Hardie and Nye Bevan' and anyone who still holds such ideals should vote for Margaret Thatcher.

So passionate is George about his Party's lost ideals that he has not been able to restrain himself from writing about them. On Easter Sunday, he 'put three questions' to every 'thinking Labour loyalist' who might stumble across a *Sunday Express*. He declared his 'long-standing attachment to social democracy' and attacked the undemocratic exercise of power 'which social democrats from Keir Hardie to Aneurin Bevan have condemned'.

Not long afterwards, on 26 April, George wrote another piece for the WHY LABOUR LEFT ME series in the *Sun*, printed under the unforgettable logo: SUN EXCLUSIVE. 'I still believe in the things I fought for,' he moaned, quoting Aneurin Bevan. 'But, alas! I hope my old party loses at the polls.'

The effect of this 'exclusive' had hardly worn off before George was back in the *Sunday Express* again (29 April), writing 'as a Labour and trade union man'. Social democrats, he emphasised, must not place themselves above the law. 'From Keir Hardie to Aneurin Bevan this has always been Labour's true position.'

Two days later (on Tuesday), he was back again on the centre page of the *Daily Telegraph*, explaining to all the Labour voters who read that paper how the unions had gone down the drain since the good old days when he represented furriers in the Thames Valley.

I do not know the current rate of pay for bleeding heart baring in Tory newspapers. But I understand that George has made more from newspaper articles in the last four weeks than most 'trade union and Labour men' make in a year. And even with inflation what it is, his payment comes to more than the equivalent of thirty pieces of silver.

THE PRESS 2
Robert Worcester and Peter Kellner

How powerful an influence does Fleet Street have?

A rival for television

It is often said that elections are won and lost exclusively on television: the other media are deemed largely irrelevant in swaying votes. But the response to the MORI/*Sunday Times* panel in the middle of the campaign suggests that the exertions of the tabloids were not wasted. Their impact was almost as great as that of television. Between April 17 and 19 a representative sample of 928 electors throughout Great Britain were asked what they thought of the things they saw and read. Table 1 shows how useful TV, the popular dailies and radio were thought to be in their coverage of the election. (The heavy dailies have been excluded from this analysis because the sub-samples are too small to be reliable. The figures for television and ths radio relate to the whole panel; those for newspapers relate to the readers of each paper.)

Most people thought television the most useful but the *Daily Express* and the *Daily Mail* were not far behind. All the popular papers were found to be more useful than the radio. Very few people had any views of the usefulness of the radio, reflecting the small number who listen to radio current affairs.

Intriguingly, both television and newspapers were more widely regarded as useful among voters who said they may change their voting intention (about one in seven of the sample) than among those whose minds were made up. In other words, potential floating voters, far from mindlessly bobbing like corks on the electoral ocean, were often people paying greater than average attention to the campaign in their search for enlightenment.

Table 2 shows how much time members of the panel said they spent following the campaign in each of the media. Again, television comes out ahead of the press, but only just. Well over half of all viewers and readers claim to spend at least ten minutes a day on the subject! Since MORI did not ask the panel to measure their use of time with stopwatches, the figures should be regarded as perceptions of how people spent their time. If, for instance, people overstate the time they spend reading about the election, it is likely to be because they pay attention to what they read. Take the *Sun* for example, a clear majority of its readers said they spent more than ten minutes a day on the paper's election coverage. Given the extent (as opposed to the stridency) of the *Sun*'s election reporting, a number of its articles must have been read very thoroughly indeed.

Table 3 (from MORI poll for the *Daily Express* on April 22-23) demonstrates how completely – with the exception of the *Sun* – each paper's own political viewpoint has been detected by its readers. The 'don't knows' are likely to consist of those readers who follow the world of sport or nipples. It seems surprising that a third of the *Sun*'s readers think the paper supports Labour and again the explanation must be that many Labour readers do not read the paper for its political coverage.

Table 4, which shows the voting intentions of the readers of the popular papers together with those of the quarter of the population who do not read any daily paper, tends to bear this out. The *Sun* is the only paper where well over half the readership vote against the paper's editorial line. About a quarter of all parties' supporters do not read any paper. (The figures in the table are combined from 3 MORI surveys.)

Although press bias is widely perceived (NS last week), bias in broadcasting is not. Equal numbers (just 4 per cent) in the MORI/*Sunday Times* panel thought ITV biased to the Conservatives and Labour. Just over 70 per cent thought it unbiased and 21 per cent offered no opinion. Most people said the BBC was unbiased, but of the minority twice as many thought it unbiased towards the Tories as to Labour (9 to 4 per cent). It seems that the BBC's establishment image lingers on.

Robert Worcester is managing director of MORI.
Peter Kellner is on the staff of the *Sunday Times*.

1 Which have you found useful in following the election campaign?

	Useful	Not useful*	Difference
Television	75	17	+58
Daily Mail	73	25	+48
Daily Express	70	27	+43
Daily Mirror	60	28	+32
Sun	59	33	+26
Radio	37	26	+11

*Don't knows omitted

2 How much time have you spent following the election each day?

	more than 30 mins	10 to 30 mins	less than 10 mins	none
on Television	38	32	19	11
in *Daily Express*	36	29	29	6
in *Daily Mail*	27	43	26	5
in *Daily Mirror*	29	27	29	15
in *Sun*	28	29	30	13
on Radio	16	15	17	50

3 Which party does your newspaper support?

Readers of . . .	Con	Lab	Lib	None	Don't know
Daily Mail	80	4	2	2	12
Daily Express	82	3	1	1	14
Sun	33	33	1	9	25
Daily Mirror	6	75	1	3	15

4 Voting intention

Readers of . . .	Con	Lab	Lib	Con Lead
Daily Express	64	23	9	+41
Daily Mail	68	20	9	+48
Sun	38	50	9	−12
Mirror	26	62	9	−36
no daily paper	41	40	13	+1

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At Mobil's new refinery development on the Thames Estuary, that price will be around £12 million — the cost of equipment to curb air, water and noise pollution.

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So where do we draw the line?

In practice, we don't. Environmental standards for industry are set by government authorities. Companies can either stick scrupulously to those basic standards or, as many do, they can go a little further, to improve conditions for their employees or to leave a safety margin — a little extra insurance.

But, as with any insurance policy, the degree of risk must be weighed against the cost of the premium.

Environmental standards are a delicate compromise between what technology can achieve and what society can afford; and that's a balance which can only be struck for society through its elected representatives.

Industry's responsibility is to demonstrate a real concern for the environment; to meet government standards without cutting corners; and to use its imagination and skill to meet them at the lowest possible cost to the consumer.

Mobil's £12 million may seem a lot to pay for an invisible asset. But it meets public standards generously, at the lowest cost we can manage.

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EASTERN EUROPE
A Special Correspondent

How are the Czechs facing the systematic pressure of the state?

The Czechs' black future

TO CZECHS the future looks grim. The economy is in a poor and fast deteriorating condition. Social life generally is rotten with corruption and graft: the Seventies have seen the collapse of professional ethics and moral standards. Political control of society by a time-serving elite is extraordinarily pervasive and effective, exploiting all the dimensions of disorganising, disarming and intimidating all opposition, actual and potential. There is little chance that the deepening economic crisis will, as happened in Poland, produce revolt and some political response: Czechoslovakia, unlike Poland, has a strong government in full control. There is, above all among the Chartists, an intensely alive opposition, but it lacks any real hope of a strategy for imminent change. Its perspective on the future is decidedly long-term.

Four unusually good harvests cannot long conceal the effects of a stagnant economy, universal inefficiency and chronic over-bureaucratisation (one textile factory in Southern Bohemia employs 800 people, 150 of whom are workers). These are only heightened by an acute labour shortage and a serious erosion of work discipline. All this makes the pervasive bribery even more natural to those who benefit from it, and more intolerable for those who don't. For ordinary people, especially women trying to combine full-time jobs with looking after their families, the search for decent provisions and services is endless, exhausting and miserably frustrating. Queues in public offices and department stores, indifference and hostility, goods under the counter and jobs on the side are the norm.

It is now standard practice to pay one's doctor 500 crowns for adequate natal care (the average monthly wage is 2,500 crowns). Doctors regularly accept bribes and, indeed, talk freely among themselves about doing so, but only the older ones have troubled consciences. Parents pay to get their children admitted to high school and university and, in particular, people pay to pass exams in Marxist philosophy. The going rate to get an applicant into medical school is 25,000 crowns, or the keys of a new car. To become, say, the manager of a shop or a petrol pump station, palms must be greased. Even foreign tourists regularly bribe hotel porters for rooms. In general, people's official jobs are merely a front behind which they are on the make on the flourishing black market. One can even bribe one's way into the Party – though, as they say in Prague, the one thing one can't do is bribe one's way out of it.

What has happened in Czechoslovakia is the breaking down of civil society and its effective replacement by party control. All key posts are manned by the orthodox, the conformist or the fearful, while the general atmosphere of cynicism and mutual distrust and widespread intimidation by those in political authority makes opposition difficult and organised revolt impossible. Since 1968 tens of thousands of Czechoslovak citizens have been denied jobs for which they are qualified because of their political opinions or associations – for being active during the Prague Spring, for example, or for being related to or associated with those who were, or more recently for signing the Charter, or for refusing to denounce those who did. Countless others have never even applied for such jobs, knowing they would not get them, some even preferring the real freedom and anonymity of routine and badly paid manual jobs. Currently, between 30 and 40 of the 1,000 or so Chartists are jobless and some 200 are employed part-time on a very low salary. Highly educated professional people in large numbers work as labourers, stokers, gardeners, window-cleaners, nightwatchmen and farm workers. Without intending it, the Czechs have achieved what the Chinese long aimed at: the unification of mental and manual labour. In some cases, because of the acute labour shortage, such workers manage to achieve conditions for reading and writing on the job. I heard of books and manuscripts, even bookshelves and typewriters, being taken to work. But these are exceptional cases. Meanwhile, the jobs these workers should be holding are held by others who owe them to their political credentials. The consequences for scholarship in the universities and standards in the professions are self-evident.

THE TEXTURE of political domination is extraordinarily fine, and little escapes its meshes. Most visible to parents is the thread of educational selection. Step out of line and your children will be denied academic or technical education at 14 or entrance to university at 18. The children, say the Czechs, are hostages. I met a bright, academically gifted 16-year-old whose parents are prominent Chartists and who works as an apprentice. His parents speak ill of the education he would have received. Most others are less ready to risk their children's futures.

Also visible is the thread of indoctrination, present from primary school to university, in professional institutions and factories. It is all empty rhetoric, believed by no-one. One of the more piquant ironies of Eastern Europe, and Czechoslovakia in particular, is to have killed Marxism stone dead. Even very young children are conscious that they are taught lies and distortions at school. Their parents are in a dilemma as to how to react. On the other hand, the orthodoxy is imbibed at some level. I heard of one family in which dissident parents, having bribed their daughter into high school, were roundly attacked by her for their insufficiently orthodox views.

The web of control and intimidation extends beyond education into people's occupational lives, their daily reading matter (the newspapers are tightly controlled, including those of the 'ghost' parties dating from 1948), their personal relations, their family lives. Surveillance and censorship provide, implicitly, a general background, while police interrogations provide the explicit foreground for those who take positive actions, such as signing or supporting the Charter, or who have made the mistake of having international contacts. Arrest and imprisonment is reserved for those who will not succumb, especially if they are neither intellectuals nor well-known. There are currently some 50 or so Chartists and Chartist sympathisers in gaol, most of them young workers and technicians. Of those with longer sentences, only one, Jiri Lederer, is a well-known intellectual.

And yet the system pays tribute to the idea of a *Rechtsstaat,* the rule of law. The Seventies are not the Fifties, and the police see themselves as bound by some rules. Extraordinary efforts are made to get the politically suspect to assist the police voluntarily and to make 'incriminating' statements which are then used as a basis for depriving them of their jobs, cutting off their telephones, withdrawing their passports and driving licences. But it all has to be done by the book and appeals to known laws made by the victim can pay off. I know of one Chartist, for example, who asked his police interrogators at least 100 times whether signing the Charter is a criminal act or not. He was variously told (1) that it is not, (2) that it could be under certain circumstances, and (3) that it is. He refused to answer all questions and retains his job and his telephone.

Most people's response to all these systematic pressures is, sooner or later, to accommodate to them. Life, after all, must be lived and few people are heroes in 'normal' times. Besides which, no viable alternatives are in sight. The Chartists are themselves divided as to the appropriate response. Some, such as the philosopher Julius Tomin, take the authorities head on, using non-violent resistance, hunger strikes and demonstrative letter writing – with remarkable success. Such intransigent tactics can substantially increase the costs of harassment. Some, less austerely combative, pursue international contacts with Eurocommunists or the Socialist International, and even with the Party and power elite within Czechoslovakia itself (the latter with scant success to date). Most pursue the vital business of variously writing, typing, binding, circulating and reading the vast and growing underground Samizdat literature, 'published' (mainly) by the so-called 'Padlock Press'. (Some 143 volumes have been published to date, including literary works, philosophical, political and sociological writings, and the rate of production is increasing.) All are preoccupied with the pressing problems of 'ordinary life' – living in authentic and constructive ways, that promise at least a relief from, and at best an alternative to, the humiliations, the philistinism, the corrosive distrust, the cynicism of Czechoslovakia today.

The Czechs have always told the subtlest and the blackest of East European political jokes. Three currently circulating in Prague tell the story better than I can:

> What is long and murmuring and eats chickens?
> A queue for pork.
>
> Three bears, one American, one Russian and one Czech discuss their respective lives. The American bear, who comes from Alaska, bemoans his lot: 'A bear can't lead a decent life anymore, what with the highways and petrol fumes and noise and advertising everywhere.' The Russian bear is no less unhappy: 'Siberia is no place anymore for a self respecting bear, what with the Komsomol brigades everywhere and the drab apartment blocks and queues for meat.' But the Czech bear is much more cheerful: 'Life is not so bad, really. I come from the High Tatras but in 1969 I was expelled from the Czechoslovak Federation of Bears and sent to the treeless plains of Southern Bohemia where I have been employed ever since as a cuckoo.'
>
> What is black and knocking at the door?
> The future.

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SOUTHEAST ASIA
John Taylor

The growing slaughter in East Timor

West aids Indonesian genocide

IT IS NOW just over three years since the Indonesian military regime began its armed invasion of the former Portuguese colony of East Timor. In this period Indonesia has, by accepted international definition, committed genocide. Some 80,000 people, over 10 per cent of the entire population, have been killed. The Indonesian government has purchased new western weapons to further its military aims.

East Timor, twice the size of Cyprus, forms the eastern half of the island of Timor (the western part is already in the Indonesian Republic). After a series of incursions into the territory, the Indonesian army launched a full-scale invasion on December 7th, 1975, to prevent the mass-based Fretilin (Revolutionary Front for an Independent East Timor) movement consolidating the control it had effectively held since the withdrawal three months earlier of the Portuguese, after 450 years of colonial rule.

The results of the invasion have been devastating: in Indonesian held areas, the population has been herded into camps where malnutrition is widespread and medical supplies scant. Entire villages have been eliminated, their contents looted and their crops destroyed. In the towns, large numbers are detained without trial under appalling conditions. In Dili, the capital, for example, prisoners are held in the food store of a former hotel; the store has neither windows nor a ventilation system. According to reports from various sources in East Timor — the Catholic Church, Indonesian officials, refugee accounts, and Fretilin radio broadcasts — torture has been widely practised in areas under Indonesian control. The worst effects of the attempted annexation, however, have been experienced in Fretilin-held mountain interior now comprising some 30-40 per cent of the country. Unable to penetrate this area, and unsuccessful in its armed engagements with Fretilin troops, the Indonesian military has increasingly shifted its strategic emphasis to aerial and naval saturation bombing in an attempt to starve the population into surrender through destroying crops and villages.

This policy was increasingly successful throughout 1978: an estimated 30-40,000 people have died as a result of the use of crop defoliants. Many more, perhaps 200,000 have entered Indonesian areas in the last two years in the hope of finding food and medical supplies. In most cases these hopes have not been fulfilled; an ambassador on a delegation visiting 'relief centres' in two villages in early September last year, commented that the people in the camps were 'in a desperate situation . . . they are starving in many cases; they are desperately ill; they need help in terms of immediate relief — food, clothing, basic medical care'. A Timorese official, according to an Australian ABC report, commented that the ambassadors had not seen the worst camps: 'At Suai things are much worse, and there are more people'. Despite these conditions, the Indonesian government has still not permitted the entry of the International Red Cross either into its own or Fretilin held areas.

Indonesian Foreign Minister, Adam Malik then estimated the number of dead as '50,000 people or perhaps 80,000'. And he went on to tell the *Canberra Times*: 'what does all this mean compared with 600,000 people who want to join Indonesia? Then what is the big fuss? It is possible that they may have been killed by Australians and not us. Who knows? It was war'.

Declaration of Independence, November 28th, 1975. From right to left. Rogero Lobato, Minister for National Defence; Xavier do Amaral, ex President; Alarico Fernandei, Minister for Information; Nicolau Lobato, President of Fretilin.

Heavy fighting has continued since the beginning of 1977, with Indonesian aerial and naval bombardment of Fretilin areas, notably the north-central region south of Dili, where Fretilin forces have suffered defeats. In an attempt to re-enter this area in late December to re-organise the Fretilin administration, a group led by Fretilin President Nicolau Lobato was ambushed, and Lobato himself killed.

Given the nature of the terrain and the strength of the resistance, Indonesia's naval and aerial capacity is crucial. Until recently, this was seriously inadequate; aircraft were archaic and pilots badly trained. Since the invasion, however, a number of western governments have stepped up military supplies. The USA has supplied Bronco OV-10 fighter planes, highly suitable for counter-insurgency; the Netherlands has agreed to provide high speed corvette frigates, important for reinforcing the naval blockade of East Timor. Most important, however, is the British government's approval for the sale of eight BAC Hawk ground attack aircraft. These planes are particularly suitable for use in East Timor. They fly low and are designed to saturate large areas using cluster bombs, which according to the *British Defence Equipment Catalogue*, have 'a high kill probability against a range of hard and soft targets'. The Hawk can also drop napalm cannisters and defoliants. The British government has, of course, denied that the planes will be used in East Timor. The Foreign Office view is that the war is a provincial skirmish, like Northern Ireland.

THE OFFICIAL BRITISH ATTITUDE to the war is echoed — perhaps less absurdly — by other industrial governments. The Australian, American, French, German, Japanese and Dutch have all turned a blind eye to Indonesia's actions. Through Australian and US intelligence services, they knew that Indonesia intended to invade at least three months before it did so, but made no attempts to prevent it. Kissinger commented on the day of the invasion 'that the US understands Indonesia's position on the question (of East Timor).' The US State Department legal representative, George Aldrich later testified to the June-July 1977 hearings of a subcommittee of the Congressional Committee on International Relations that 'a policy (opposing the incorporation of East Timor) would not serve our best interests in the light of the importance of our relations with Indonesia'.

Press coverage has reflected the lack of government concern. Noam Chomsky pointed out to the UN last year that: 'In 1975, when the fate of the Portuguese colonies was a matter of much concern in the West, Timor received 6 full columns in the annual index (of entries in the *New York Times*). In 1976, when the Indonesian army was beginning the "annihilation of the simple mountain people", coverage dropped to half a column. In 1977, when this massacre was reaching truely awesome proportions, coverage dropped to five lines.'

A revealing comparison can be made with recent events in Cambodia. In the case of Cambodia, a government established as a result of a victory over an invading western power then implemented policies resulting in violations of human rights, accompanying an imposed attempt at rapid economic reconstruction. Given the nature of the Cambodian regime and its previous experiences with the Western governments, it was impossible for the latter to do much about the violations, even if they wished to. But, on the basis of a rather small body of often conflicting evidence, the Cambodian regime was subjected to a barrage of government and press criticism for its human rights violations.

In the case of East Timor, an attempt is still being made to deny a nation its political independence. Indonesia is trying to remove a government which has an effective popular base, as a result of its literacy campaigns, health schemes, and agricultural co-operativisation before the invasion. Unlike Cambodia, it *is* possible to influence the Indonesian regime, since it heavily depends on the industrial nations for loans, aid and military assistance. Yet, although there have been human rights violations on a greater relative scale and these have been more fully substantiated, the minimal press coverage and government reaction has been at best quiet and at worst supportive, even to the extent of supplying repressive military equipment.

Nevertheless, the eventual outcome of the war remains open. And the continuation of the suffering and brutal treatment of the East Timorese people is, still, dependent on the sanctioning of military aid from the west.

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London Diary

☐ Lord Brocket, of Brocket Hall near Welwyn Garden City, is a popular young lord, as peers go. Locals admire him for his lack of 'side'. He cuts his own hedges, mends his walls, hasn't bought a new pair of shoes for ten years and, instead of availing himself of private ecclesiastical facilities, sits among the commonalty at local church services.

Conservationists, however, are not so happy about his plans – passed last week by Labour-controlled Welwyn-Hatfield council – to turn Brocket Hall into a conference centre and to erect a £5m. 'hotel complex' in the grounds.

Brocket Hall has long been a counterbalance to that dreadful GBS-inspired Socialist utopia known as Welwyn Garden City. Built in the mid-eighteenth century, it was the country home of Lady Caroline Lamb, who ceremoniously burned the faithless Byron's letters on a funeral pyre in the grounds. Her long-suffering husband William (later Lord Melbourne) was often in attendance.

It is, of course, difficult maintaining stately homes these days. But Lord Brocket's current entrepreneurial activities are strangely at odds with his alleged dedication to tradition. When an unpublished Byron letter was discovered earlier this year at Brocket, he refused to sell it. 'I'm not a Byron student', he said, 'but the main reason why it should not be sold is that it's linked with the history of the house, and the more links you have the better.'

Margot Strickland, the Byron scholar, and a tenant at Brocket Hall, is refusing Lord Brocket's invitation to get out. She is working on a biography of William and Caroline Lamb, using the archives there. 'It's true that Lord Brocket offered alternative accommodation', she says, 'but it was an uninhabitable hovel, and I indignantly rejected it.' Lord Brocket, who housed the Conservative candidate during the election for much less than he charges his tenants, has probably bitten off more than he can eschew: Mrs Strickland is not moving. 'They will have to prise me bodily from the walls and from the archives', she says.

☐ Without warning, participants in the dummy run for Radio 4's election coverage were flashed a false news bulletin that President Carter had been assassinated. As if that were not enough to trigger a heart attack, a further news item went on to say that it was just another Carter, also a peanut farmer, who had been shot. The BBC justifies its cavalier invention by referring back to the 1964 election coverage, when pundits were so taken aback by news of the sudden deposition of Khrushchev that they all dried up. I can't wait to hear, at the next election, a plummy BBC voice intoning: 'The Queen has been run over by a Ford Cortina – and now over to our commentator in Cardiff South-East, where . . .'

☐ A group of Irish businessmen, mostly newcomers to the gentle art of transportation, last weekend started 'Seajet', a regular cross-Channel hydrofoil service between Brighton and Dieppe. Were it not racist, I would describe the venture so far as a real-life Irish joke.

The 'Seajet' cruises at an effortless 50 mph. The distance from Brighton to Dieppe (including the required 'dog-leg' to cross the shipping lanes at right angles) is a little over 80 miles. Dividing one by the other, the journey time is exactly 100 minutes – an adman's dream, which they were quick to exploit. Unfortunately, they had forgotten that at each end of the journey the hydrofoil had to come down off its stilts and, in order to get into the harbour, revert to being a wallowing hull-borne craft, a metamorphosis that costs about 15 minutes at each end. Worse, the company actually believed its own publicity, and calculated schedules on the basis of the 100-minute crossing. The first trip has been arriving 30 minutes late, the second an hour late, the whole schedule culminating in the sixth and final crossing, anything up to three hours late. Hopes of speeding things up have been foiled by the problem of loading drunken day-trippers (a consideration the Irish should surely have taken into account). Neither has the French connection been easy to deal with. On the opening day last Friday, Dieppe dockers, worried that the new service might kill off the unprofitable Newhaven-Dieppe ferries, retaliated with a wire stretched across the harbour entrance. Those who had set off from London early on Friday evening for a gastronomic weekend arrived in the early hours of Saturday to find all the restaurants closed. They were not very pleased.

☐ When it comes to televisual trafficking in children, the EEC has failed to define a common policy. Being a bit short of the old ready, I let the house last week to a Dutch film company. They were making a television commercial for a revolting chocolate milk shake. Twelve tiny tots turned up, with doting mothers. The girls were in strapless satin tops, their immature bony shoulders dusted with gold sparkle, the boys in a parody mix of Western cowboy and Mississippi steamboat. In pseudo-disco style, they danced all day to a new rock number 'Shoobie, doobie, *Chocomel*.' The director and wardrobe mistress had been flown in from Paris, the production team from Amsterdam. Why go to all that expense? It turned out that Dutch children can be used for television commercials only when *en famille* – enjoying a wedge of Edam, for example, with Mum and Dad at the table.

There appeared to be a slight logical flaw here. If it was 'immoral' to use Dutch children, surely the use of any children, of whatever nationality, would be condemned by Dutch television authorities? 'You don't understand', the producer said. 'Everyone in Holland will realise that these are not Dutch children. We would never dream of exploiting children for commercial purposes.' That explains everything.

☐ The Law Society's decision to advertise in an attempt to improve the public image of solicitors comes not before time. Even so, there are occasional examples, within a profession held in almost universal derision, of something nearly approaching altruism. After several years in New York, a friend decided to buy a flat in London. She was attracted by a Britton Poole & Burns advertisement for 'superior fully modernised luxury flats in a prestige purpose-built block, occupying a superb position opposite Regents Park.' On the strength of the show flat, she bought one of the flats in Oslo Court. She didn't mind too much that the only view from her windows was an unlovely council estate; what upset her was that the promised modernisation had not taken place. Furious inquiries revealed that the mysterious vendor-lessors were, variously, Tarlink Ltd, City & Country Properties, and one Mr Ashkar, an Iranian who had bought 20 of the flats in Oslo Court. When telephoned, Mr Ashkar expressed amazement at the oversight, but did nothing. Lawyers were brought in, but gave up in honest despair. 'As we do charge for the work actually carried out', they wrote, 'you would be incurring extra charges if we become involved. The cost of disputing these matters is such that the difference between you and the landlords needs to be quite great to make it worthwhile.' Faced with the unappetising choice between paying as much for legal advice as it would cost to carry out repairs, she has taken matters into her own hands. She refuses to pay the annual service charge of £500 until the work has been completed. It should make a juicy case for the lawyers she no longer employs.

☐ The Royal Commission on Criminal Procedure, set up in February last year under the chairmanship of Sir Cyril Phillips, a professor of oriental history, is already yielding some sparkling gems. Colin Simpson, editor of *Police Review*, drew my attention to the evidence of the Senate of the Inns of Court and the Bar. Tucked away among an otherwise sensible survey of police power is the paragraph: 'We have received many complaints that the Railway Police Force is anachronistic and not always as efficient as it could be, and we are recommending that it should be abolished . . .' For a start, and on the grounds of accuracy, there is no such thing as the Railway Police – though the British Transport Police exists, and employs about 2,000 people. But the charming assumption that institutions should be scrapped because of mere inefficiency opens up mind-boggling vistas. We could get rid of Parliament, the Post Office, dustmen and even – who knows? – the Bar.

Ruth Hall

This England

Prizes: £3 book token for first entry, £2 tokens for others printed. Paste entries on a postcard.

☐ A Gatwick Airport official flaps his arms like an eagle to scare birds from runways when planes are landing or taking off. Mr Michael Cook, 37, operations management duty officer, said yesterday: 'This and other bird-scaring devices here are paying off. The Civil Aviation Authority has just issued figures showing there are fewer incidents of planes striking birds at Gatwick than elsewhere.' – *Daily Telegraph* (Mrs M. Wickham)

☐ 'I was in Margate not long ago working at a nightclub. I came out at 2.30 to drive home. There was this feller by my Rolls putting a 4lb club hammer through the rear wing. I walked up to him. He was standing there swinging this hammer against the wing. I said: "What do you think you're doing?" He just looked up at me and said "F------ Rolls-Royce, innit?" – *Daily Mail* (Mark Driscill)

☐ John Travolta refused to do a photo session for Lord Snowdon, saying, 'I don't know the guy's work.' – *Blue Jeans* (Ronya Carne)

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LETTERS to the EDITOR

Silly old Keynes

Sir, May I trespass upon your valuable space to congratulate your two contributors Christopher Hitchens and Bruce Page ('Political theory of the overdogs', NS 13 April) upon their novel interpretation of Keynes's *General Theory*. When Keynes wrote that pyramid-building, earthquakes, wars and the burying of old bottles full of banknotes may 'serve to increase wealth' he was not, we learn, being serious. It was all a joke, or at least a piece of 'irony' intended to emphasise some point which is, I dare say, clear to Hitchens and Page though not I fear to me. If this interpretation is correct, someone should hasten to tell the authors of the 1979 Labour Party manifesto as well as those who, for the past forty years, have accepted Keynes's proposals literally enough to apply them with consequences clear for all to see.

Sadly the truth is that Keynes was deadly serious. He believed above all that demand is necessary to create supply. Any device which puts money-to-spend in the hands of consumers was to him desirable, however ridculous the means. What he did *not* understand was that demand, generated by any act other than the production of saleable goods, means *excess* demand, that is, inflation. Satisfiable demand derives only from the incomes generated from the manufacture of precisely those commodities which persons will wish to buy. The key to wealth is entrepreneurial initiative, not consumer demand.

Your contributors be advised also that there is nothing in the *General Theory* which is new, just as there is nothing in the growing reaction to the *General Theory* which is new. We are simply rehearsing all over again the great debate of the early 19th century. I quote from John Stuart Mill writing in 1820 on 'Keynesian' ideas of the seventeen hundreds:

> Among the *mistakes which were most pernicious* in their direct consequences . . . was the immense importance attached to consumption. The great end of all legislation in matters of national wealth, according to prevalent opinion, was to create consumers. This object under varying names . . . was conceived to be the great condition of prosperity.

Following this observation Mill goes on to elaborate all of the points made by Keynes, differing only in the conclusions drawn from them.

IVOR F. PEARCE
Department of Economics
University of Southampton

Monetarist good sense

Sir, Jeremy Bray (NS April 6th) has misrepresented the technical debate on what he chooses to define as monetarism. Being a politician, he also confirms one's reasonable expectation that politicians will not in general follow the details of current technical debates. Why should he, any more than Sir Keith Joseph or Sir Geoffrey Howe, do so? It is up to technical economists to explain their findings in ordinary English to those in political life, whose specialisation is different. Nevertheless Dr Bray has pitched his tents on technical ground and there I will meet him.

If he would care to pick up recent issues of the *Journal of Monetary Economics*, the *Journal of Political Economy*, *Economic Inquiry*, the *American Economic Review*, and any other of the leading economic journals, he will find – as I suspect he well knows – that there is an intense debate in progress on the question of whether there should be fixed rules or (non-discretionary) stabilisation rules for both monetary and fiscal policy. This debate turns primarily on the nature of expectations, the distribution of information flows across economic agents, the nature and length of contracts and the degree of competition in goods and labour markets. It also – here he is partially right – turns on how far governments can be trusted to implement stabilisation rules, but then one might ask if you cannot trust them this far, then how could they be trusted to implement fixed rules? This debate is in any case essentially secondary – one of political implementation rather than principle – if nevertheless important in itself.

There is very wide agreement among macroeconomists that the money supply should be controlled over the long run, this is, abstracting from the question of short run stabilisation. Recognising the government's financial constraints, economists would now generally agree that this also implies long run control over the budget deficit. In this important sense opinion has moved very strongly towards the monetarist position. In fact, if one considers the original debates of the 1960s and early 1970s on the nature of the 'long run trade off' between inflation and unemployment, it is quite clear that the monetarists have swept the board; these issues have virtually disappeared.

The irony of Dr Bray's argument is that the debate on stabilisation rules is one largely *between* monetarists. But its importance should not be over emphasised. The long run commitments to budget and money supply targets implying zero inflation are the important thing since they ensure a framework of monetary and price level stability. Given those, whether the government pursues some modest counter-cyclical rule or not is a refinement to the self-stabilising properties of the economy. In this sense the present views of Sir Keith Joseph and Sir Geoffrey Howe are very much in the mainstream of contemporary macroeconomic thinking; and one may add it is for this reason that their opponents on the Labour front bench have nevertheless felt compelled to adopt closely related views, even while often and loudly proclaiming their distaste. Is it not therefore time to stop the charade that somehow monetarism is a nightmare or a bogey rather than simply macroeconomic good sense?

PATRICK MINFORD
Professor of Applied Economics
University of Liverpool

Jeremy Bray replies: Professor Minford seems to confuse 'monetarism', implying a particular approach to monetary policy, and 'monetary economics' or the economics of money, which is the proper study of many economists, including himself.

I discussed Sir Keith Joseph's definition of monetarism, not my own, as Professor Minford suggests, although I agree Sir Keith's definition is broadly in line with popular usage. If it is misrepresentation, it is Sir Keith's misrepresentation, not mine, which Professor Minford is attacking. I would be glad to discuss both monetarism and monetary economics more fully, and hope to do so in the NEW STATESMAN soon. I agree monetary economics includes among others the matters Professor Minford raises.

Professor Minford is one of the very few economists who is reasonably numerate, a monetary economist, and a monetarist in something like Sir Keith Joseph's sense of the word. But he shows his slip as an ex-Treasury official and does himself an injustice with his blanket cynicism about all politicians. Explanations by technical economists, to which he refers us, are so conflicting that I see no alternative to politicians who aspire to judge economic policy, equipping themselves to understand the technicalities, just as the Attorney General and the Lord Chancellor do, we hope, understand something of the technicalities of the law. Only thus can they expose the underlying political assumptions. Having tried to do so with economics, I believe the state of economics itself is nothing like so parlous as many suppose, but that NS readers will, I hope, be able to judge for themselves.

The Kipling mystery

Sir, Having been in France, I have only just seen the article by Charles Carrington entitled 'The Kipling "Mystery"' (NS 2 March). I should like to express my appreciation of the generous praise which he gave to my husband's *Life of Kipling* in the last paragraph. As he says, widely different opinions about Kipling may peacefully coexist, but I should be grateful if you would allow me to comment on a few matters of fact.

Mr Carrington refers to Kipling's sister, Mrs Fleming, as the 'imaginative psychopath who was Lord Birkenhead's chief adviser'. Mrs Fleming was in no sense my husband's adviser on his biography of Kipling. What she in fact did was to give him valuable information about the two periods of her brother's life in which she had been more closely involved than any other person then living. These were, of course, the childhood experiences which they shared when they were left by their parents at what Kipling called 'The House of Desolation' at Southsea, and, secondly, the years in India later on, before either of them had married. At the time when my husband was doing his research for the book Mrs Fleming's health was perfectly normal. She had endured a long period of what we would now call, I suppose, a nervous breakdown, but had emerged from it before her husband's death and her memory of her childhood was phenomenal. Its accuracy astonished my husband when he went to see the house where she and her brother had lived at Southsea. It was many years since she had been there, but she had written a description of it for him which he found absolutely accurate down to the last detail.

Her help to him included long written answers to questions put to her which show her to have been perfectly in command of her faculties at that time. They are well-written, make interesting reading and are often most amusing.

Mr Carrington says that he and Mrs Bambridge were brought up in Edwardian England before the First World War, while Birkenhead was 'post-war', and makes a contrast between what he considers to have been their beliefs: 'To us, Duty, Loyalty, Service and Efficiency were virtues not jokes,' implying that they were jokes to Birkenhead. Mr Carrington never knew my husband, but to anyone who did the picture of him as a man who despised duty, loyalty etc. is no less absurd than Mr Carrington's previous description of him in an article in the *Times Literary Supplement* two years ago as 'nearly allied to the Bright Young Things'. They were indeed virtues to him as much as to Mr Carrington and Mrs Bambrdige, although he might have been surprised to see them honoured with capital letters in the NEW STATESMAN. He adds: 'Birkenhead is of the school of Lytton Strachey debunkers.' The biographies which my husband wrote of Lord Halifax, Walter Monckton and Professor Lindemann are not the work of a 'Lytton Strachey debunker.' His aim was always to try to present his subject fairly and objectively.

On the much-discussed subject of what Mrs Bambridge's reason was for suppressing my husband's book, Mr Carrington makes a new suggestion which differs from that given in the *TLS* article when he wrote: 'Elsie's real objection to the Birkenhead draft, as she told me plainly, was that it was

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riddled with the amateur psychoanalysis that had become fashionable in the 1930s.' In the article in the NEW STATESMAN he seems to think that unfavourable remarks about her mother were a major objection and writes that there were passages about her in my husband's biography 'that no daughter could have approved in print.' I have seen that several writers, having failed to find any other reason for Mrs Bambridge's suppression of the book, have supposed that she must have objected to criticisms of her mother. I think the time has come for me to explain that this could not possibly have been the case. During the very first interview that my husband had with her in London they talked about her parents. She was obviously devoted to her father but expressed herself very strongly on the subject of her mother, whom she seemed actively to dislike, and ended by saying: 'I don't care *what* you say about my mother – the sky's the limit.' I remember this absolutely clearly, because it shocked my husband (who was not easily shocked) perhaps the more because he was devoted to his own mother. In the typescript record of Mrs Bambridge's interviews with my husband there are several references to her mother's abnormally possessive attitude towards her husband. Her mother was jealous of Kipling's affection for his daughter and would never allow them to go anywhere alone together. Towards the end of his life she was so worried about Mrs Kipling's possessiveness, which she felt was having a very bad effect on her father, that she and Captain Bambridge tried to arrange for Kipling to be taken away from her, at any rate for a temporary break. According to Mrs Bambridge, whenever he tried to break away from his wife, even for a short time, she would stage hysterics which upset him terribly and he was terrified that she might injure herself. My husband did not use all that she told him in his book, but in these circumstances it cannot be thought that what he did write about her mother was the reason for Mrs Bambridge's objection to his book being published. I think it still remains a Kipling mystery.

SHEILA BIRKENHEAD

Charlton
Banbury

Pakistan after Bhutto

Sir, Tariq Ali's article on Bhutto's death (NS 13 April) is both cynical and absurd. May I remind him that Pakistan's former Prime Minister Mr Z. A. Bhutto was tried by two superior courts of the country, the High Court and Supreme Court – a trial which took nearly two years, the longest in the country's legal history. Both these courts found him guilty of conspiring to murder a political opponent. The quick job made of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in Dacca and Sardar Daud Khan in Kabul, not to mention the scores of executions in Tehran, did not leave room for such a passionate comment. In Pakistan the reaction to Bhutto's death, sad though it is, will be viewed against a background of the years of tyrannical rule followed by massive rigging in the 1977 elections which started a popular revolutionary movement ending in his downfall, and the chances of any real trouble are meagre. The Pakistan People's Party is in disarray because Mr Bhutto never allowed it to function as a regular political party.

Countries do not disintegrate simply because one politician has been convicted of conspiring to murder a political opponent. Pakistan did not break up when its founder Mohammad Ali Jinnah (called an agnostic by Tariq Ali) died within a year of the country's birth and his first Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan was assassinated in 1951. Pakistan is here to stay forever with or without Bhutto for its 73 million people.

Historians are busy researching into reasons why East Pakistan, now Bangladesh, broke away from Pakistan. It is a mystery to me how Sheikh Mujibur Rahman 'conned' the Muslims of East Pakistan into throwing out the baby with the bath water in 1971.

Please give Pakistan's politicians a fresh chance to build new politics and let us hope a political alternative to Mr Bhutto will emerge.

JAMIL AHMAD

14 Charminster Avenue
London SW19

Paying for genocide

Sir, Judith Hart's letter (NS 6 April) brimmed with indignation at the suggestion, by Mary Dines and me, that her Ministry had left the Eritreans to their genocidal fate. She also congratulated herself at length. She wrote: 'I do not readily take to putting my own record in print; the people in the third world who care know it . . .'

Well, the Eritreans live in the third world and they 'care', especially about staying alive; and they also know that the Minister's 'record' includes a refusal to send direct humanitarian aid because they do not constitute a 'recognised state'. Mrs Hart has every reason to be concerned about her image; she dismissed the Eritreans in one inconclusive sentence while extolling her own 'record'. Mary Dines and I, who have been to Eritrea and have seen people dying for want of the most basic medical help, such as antibiotics and even bandages, outlined the facts of Britain's culpable neglect of the Eritreans. Mrs Hart, in her reply, answered *none* of these facts and instead confined her concern to the headline above her photograph.

JOHN PILGER

Hotel Camino Real
Mexico City

Against slavery

Sir, The wild claims in Hugh Brogan's letter on the abolition of the slave trade (Letters 30 March) deserve reply. Brogan writes that, at the Congress of Vienna, 'Castlereagh secured from the powers an unprecedented declaration condemning the slave trade, thus laying the foundation for its international outlawry . . . in 1817 Castlereagh got abolition treaties out of Spain and Portugal . . . He did as much as any Englishman . . . to put the Atlantic slave trade on the way to extinction.' In fact for half a century following the Vienna Congress declaration the Atlantic slave trade continued, carrying nearly two million Africans to the American slave plantations; one of the best customers for the produce of these plantations was Britain. The Atlantic slave trade only ended following the victory of the Union in the American Civil War – a victory the British government did nothing to assist.

The real attitude of British governments during most of the period from Castlereagh to the American Civil War was candidly summed up by the Duke of Wellington in a private communication to Aberdeen in 1828: 'The whole question is one of impression. We shall never succeed in abolishing the foreign slave trade. But we must take care to avoid any step which may induce the people of England to believe that we do not do everything in our power to discourage and put it down.' It would be absurd to regard Castlereagh as free from the general cynicism of British Ministers on this question. During the first four years of operation of Castlereagh's abolition treaty with Spain not one single slave trader was apprehended in the Caribbean, despite a boom in the 'illicit' slave trade to Cuba. The apparent impotence of the mighty British navy in the Caribbean contrasted instructively with the success of the Haitian warship *Wilberforce* in seizing two slavers during these years. If Paul Foot is to be criticised it is for dismissing too abruptly the contribution to anti-slavery made by some of Toussaint's successors, notably Pétion, who gave vital assistance to Bolivar in return for a commitment to abolish slavery.

The ineffectiveness of the British government did arouse domestic opposition; in the 1850s British pressure helped to secure an end to the Brazilian slave trade. But there is a remarkable contrast between the success of Castlereagh, Palmerston and other British Foreign Secretaries in securing advantageous trade treaties with Spain, Portugal and Brazil, and their failure on slavery treaties.

British diplomats were well aware of such discrepancies. As late as 1872 we find the British consul in Havana passing on the following comment: 'America and England encourage and aid the perpetuation of slavery in Cuba: the first by purchasing nearly all the slave grown sugar of the island, the latter by permitting such sugar to enter England under the same duties as our own free-grown sugar'; and, a month later, 'The slave owners here certainly played their cards well. They have found out the best means of dealing with Madrid, they now dread no interference from England, for her policy of non-intervention prevents that . . . No country will go to war with Spain for the sake of the Negroes and Chinese, the planters know this quite well . . .' In fact, Britain and the United States supplied arms to Spain for use against Cubans who had abolished slavery in the areas they controlled.

In Africa itself official British abolitionism helped to justify the acquisition of Nigeria and Zanzibar; the Berlin Conference of 1884, which promoted the partition of the continent, was convened for the ostensible purpose of suppressing the remaining slave trade. But this is enough history; surely, a century later, we live in a quite different world?

ROBIN BLACKBURN

10 Eccleston Square
London SW1

Distorting the news

Sir, Richard Francis may well convince with his air of hurt innocence (Letters 20 April), but when he says, 'I am content to let the public be the judges of our journalistic objectivity . . .' I would like to challenge him to do just that. Not long ago *Nationwide* had to admit to a 5:1 viewer accusation of right wing bias. Could the Director of News and Current Affairs therefore tell us if, among his programmes, *Nationwide* is unique?

W. LEAH

306 Devizes Road
Salisbury, Wiltshire

Any old iron

Sir, Mr Larry Adler writes that 'in the *New Yorker* of March 26 Graham Greene is quoted' – no matter about what. This gives me an opportunity to warn away any readers putting trust in a so-called Profile by Mrs Penelope Gilliatt which appeared in that number. It will be safer for them to assume that almost anything there I am made to say is probably – to put it kindly – inaccurate. Her imagination extends from recording the presence of vultures in Antibes to a mysterious Czech official of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs who, she writes, abused me on the BBC (using by an odd coincidence the very words of Doctor Duvalier.) An even more mysterious Englishman apparently invited me to visit 'an internment camp' in Argentine, but I'm afraid both the camp and the Englishman are products of Mrs Gilliatt's rather wild imagination.

GRAHAM GREENE

Antibes

A dreadful warning

Sir, In my long experience, 28 April was the first time your paper has appeared without a letters page. In case you, as a comparative newcomer to the chair, consider this to be a matter of small consequence may I assure you that in a paper of the standing of the NS the role of public forum is of prime interest. One could more easily imagine *The Times* appearing not at all than appearing without its letters page. Please do not commit this lapse of good taste and common sense again. Paul Johnson during his term in your seat scrapped the crossword, and we know where he is today.

ARTHUR J. KEEFE

88 Wyndcliff Road
London SE7

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FIRST PERSON
Arthur Marshall

Spring in the air

The spacious grounds of 'Myrtlebank', which in the last eight odious months have taken as bad a climatic hammering as any other small property in our usually mild Devonian neighbourhood, are now bravely struggling back to what my revered Americans like to refer to as 'normalcy', much helped by the mid-April weather. In the dear old days, for such they were for some of us, of private grass tennis courts, and private lawn tennis parties upon them, jolly hostesses used, when issuing telephonic invitations to play, to say 'Let's just hope that the clerk of the weather turns up trumps for us'. Well, nobody hereabouts could possibly have complained about the clerk's activities on Easter Day. Utterly and totally trumps it was. Cloudless sky. Real heat in the sun. Cold winds a thing of the past. The daffs, three weeks late, all out. Climbing roses full of shoots and promise. The pasque-flower (a species of anemone), which always knows the date of Easter no matter how erratic the calendar in lovely mauve and yellow bloom.

What else to report? Primroses a joy. Hyacinths a showy patch of colour. Violas emerging. I am not too sure what the plural of clematis may be but they also were on the move, save for my Lawsoniana Light Blue which is, I keep telling myself, like all the best brains at school a 'slow starter'. The cotoneaster (charming little white and starry flower) which conceals unsightly drain pipes on my terrace and which seemed dead as a doornail, is vigorously sprouting. The passion flower, a sorry black stump at the moment, may yet be alive, so exuberantly passionate has it been these last ten years. Ditto the ceanothuses and the veronicas (the experts say don't lose heart until the end of June). It is, anyway, a time for hope and a time (when is it not?) for counting blessings.

Whenever I start off on a thankful totting-up of Life's benedictions, I get an uncomfortable feeling that I may sound boastful and unacceptably content and I am well aware that complacency is a failing that I must guard against. I don't mean to be irritating. I am merely deeply grateful for what has come my way boonwise. Splendid health for one thing, housed in a sturdy physique and topped by a roundish face that has for many years now qualified for the polite adjective 'chubby'. And now here's an oddity. I have found myself to be, visually, a cause of ceaseless comment among my friends, not all of it phrased in exactly the way that one would choose oneself. 'If you can't think of anything nice to say, don't say anything at all' is a useful nursery motto that doesn't seem to have come everybody's way. My friends tend to go in for frank statements freely and fearlessly expressed. 'I think you're a bit fatter than the last time I saw you', they say reflectively, heads on one side and gazing their fill at my evidently plumper contours. What to reply that sounds both jovial and unhuffy (such a mistake to display vexation)? I find that the sentence 'Oh you do, do you?' is just about right, chummy enough but yet with that slight hint of an answering challenge in it. The fact that I have never in my life presumed to tell somebody that they were fatter or thinner or taller or sillier is, I suppose, neither here nor there, but I count it a small private virtue just the same.

Well then, gratitude sweeps over me when I consider the really sensational volume of laughter that has been allotted to me from heaven's coffers or wherever, coupled with many splendid friends with which to share it. I once found myself on a platform in Cheltenham's extremely commodious town hall, summoned at festival time to discuss, with two distinguished humorists and before an audience of six hundred or so, eager for information, the nature and cause of laughter. Why do we, in fact, laugh? I could have told everybody before we started that we were wasting our time and theirs. Nobody knows, and it kills comedy to try to tease out the whys and wherefores. However, we each let out a certain amount of hot air on the subject, by way of earning our handsome fees and calming consciences, and then we went on to relate various episodes in our lives that had made us laugh, after which everybody cheered up no end and we could all remove the plummy and po-faced expressions that people think it right to assume when serious discussions are in progress.

In the field of laughter-provokers it is the serious faces that have often been my downfall. My Essex grandmother was, on her day, a prime chuckler and a great ally and I loved her dearly but she had too her glum and sober side. She had also an enormously wide correspondence with various friends and relations on whom life's misfortunes seemed to have crowded in to an extent that even the mildest person would consider unreasonable and it was her custom to read out at the breakfast table the latest bulletins from the different horror fronts. This was danger time for as a child of eight one could bear just so much and no more. There was one particular family ('My poor old Gunstons') who were in a permanent pickle. No 'flu germ avoided them, no rail crash occurred without them being on the train and at the very centre of the disaster. If a Zeppelin (it was first world war time) dropped a bomb, it landed near the Gunstons. The Gunston children caught, with hideous regularity, anything that was going in the way of croup or diphtheria or measles. If Mr Gunston invested in shares, it was a signal for the bottom to drop right out of the market. We thought that the Gunstons had no more, so to speak, to offer, but no, for the eldest Gunston son had married and himself begat a series of children, all of them revelling in the family tradition and becoming from birth woefully trouble-prone. Fresh news of them came one disastrous morning. The first child had got rickets. The second child had swallowed a safety-pin. 'And the third child', gloomily read out my grandmother as she turned over the page, 'has a pronounced strabismus.' I did not then know what a strabismus was. I vaguely realised that 'pronounced' here meant that, as a strabismus, it was not to be sneered at. But it was the sound of the two words together that I found irresistible. I choked on my kipper, burst into uncontrollable shrieks and was in deep deep trouble for many days.

And before long I had another bad lapse, though this time I was much less to blame. My grandmother, like many of her age and generation, took a keen interest and pleasure in death in all its various aspects. Funerals provided many an enjoyable sortie. Hardly a week seemed to pass ('Dear old Kate Turner has gone') without my grandmother being seen in deepest black and about to set off, *visage d'occasion* in position, for a burial ceremony. On one occasion my mother and I were bidden to accompany her for we knew the victim ('Dear old Maud Laver') and, having frequently been to tea, thus became suitable funeral attenders. A hired car was engaged, for there was a mile or two to go, and my Uncle Oswald, a hilarious wag who laughed fully as much as I did, volunteered fatally to accompany us. Seating himself beside the driver while the rest of us crowded into the dark and stuffy body of the vehicle, he discovered a small roller blind that separated the driving seat from the back and which could be pulled down and then rattled up with a satisfactory whirr and click. Knowing full well the effect it would have on me, he pretended to be a photographer and, using the blind as a camera shutter, kept urging us in the customary jargon to 'adopt a tasteful expression' and to 'look pleasant please' while the blind shot noisily up and down and my grandmother, who had long since assumed her funeral face, became crosser and crosser. This only drove him to further wild excesses ('Kindly moisten the lips and smile') and we arrived at the church in such a state of disarray that it was considered inadvisable for me to be present at the ceremony. I was sent home in the car and in disgrace and poor old Maud Laver, who was a dear and wouldn't have cared a hoot, had to shuffle her way into the hereafter without me.

Roger Woddis

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MAY BOOKS

Clive James

Boss, Hog, Howler, Truth-Teller

The Yawning Heights by ALEXANDER ZINOVIEV *Bodley Head* £9.95

Somewhere in the middle of this enormous book there is a tiny story about a Soviet trainee pilot with slow reflexes. The flying instructors are not allowed to fail anybody. So they just give him his orders a long way in advance. He passes the course and goes to the front, where on his first mission he does not drop his bombs until he gets back to base. Equality has been achieved. *The Yawning Heights* is about a society which has succeeded in what it set out to do. Its author, Alexander Zinoviev, is not entirely posing when he claims to be engaged in the dispassionate analysis of an historical movement which has fulfilled its aims.

The Yawning Heights has been five years reaching us. It hardly needs saying that we are lucky to be reading it at all. The author's dateline suggests that he finished writing it in 1974. But the first Russian edition of *Ziyayushchiye Vysoty* did not come out until 1976. Published by L'Age d'Homme in Lausanne, it is a neat paperback volume closely printed on thin pages. There is a grainy full-length photograph of Zinoviev on the back. Dapperly clad, he stands in front of a squalid building which a signboard proclaims to be the Philosophy Faculty of Moscow University, where he was a Professor of Logic until the regime began treating him as an enemy. His previous books had been academic philosophical works which had won him an international reputation and abundant prestige within his own country. Like Sakharov, Zinoviev was rebelling from a position of privilege.

The Russian edition was reviewed in the *New York Review of Books* for 14 April 1977, by Aleksandr Nekrich, himself a distinguished scholar who had sacrificed his career to the truth. Nekrich's review – which retains the status of a primary critical article – was a clear indication that a book of the first importance was on its way towards us. The French edition of the book, *Les Hauteurs Béantes*. was published later that same year, once again by L'Age d'Homme. Though elegantly printed, in sheer bulk it was about three times the size of the Russian original. Since the translator, Wladimir Berelowitch, wrote with unfaltering terseness, it was already becoming evident just how much meaning must be compressed into Zinoviev's idioms and coinages. In fact the translation made embarrassing demands even on one's French. But by now there could be small doubt that the book was of capital significance. This time the photograph was a typical piece of histrionically lit Russian portrait photography, with Zinoviev looking like a cosmonaut who did not very much want to take off.

Onward to 1979. Finally the English edition appears. It is even bigger than the French one. The grainy Philosophy Faculty photograph is once again on the back, although by now it is out of date: Zinoviev came to the West last year. The layout is not at all elegant. The sub-headings which in the Russian and French editions help break up the text into sections of invitingly browsable length are here meanly set up exactly the same as the body-type, so that the whole thing flows on and on like the Don. But the translator, Gordon Clough, has done pretty well. If that sounds grudging, it should be remembered that the first translations of works such as this are crucial to their future history. Partly due to an inadequate translation, Zamyatin's *We* made little impact when it first came out in English, and thus we were deprived of a prophetic insight into the nature of the totalitarian state. Zamyatin guessed a lot in advance. It could be said that Zinoviev is merely being wise after the event. But the event is of such magnitude, and his wisdom is of such a unique kind, that *The Yawning Heights* can only be thought of as a work vital to the continuity of civilisation. It would have been a disaster if the translation had misfired. Luckily it sins only through sounding like a translation. Otherwise the book has survived its journey. It has been heading our way like a planet on a collision course. Now it fills the sky and we can see all the details.

In *The Yawning Heights* the Soviet Union is portrayed as a garbage-dump called Ibansk, which is a way of saying Fucktown, or Screwsville, as well as of implying that the average Russian – Ivan – lives in a place just like it. The word Swiftian can easily be applied to the physical details of Ibansk. There is a lot of human ordure lying about. Going to the lavatory bulks large amongst Ibanskian activities. It is basically a very shitty scene. But Zinoviev's whole point is that he can't really exaggerate no matter how hard he tries. Really Ibansk is just the Soviet Union with the lavatory doors taken off. The book is less a satire than a sociological treatise on the level of Weber or Pareto. Everything that happens in Ibansk has already happened in the Soviet Union. But nobody has previously managed to make an entirely coherent picture of it.

An Ibanskian in the street shouts 'Arrogant blockhead!' and is immediately arrested for insulting the Leader, even though he was only abusing a workmate. Everyone in Ibansk understands how things are. They just can't face the facts any other way except a few at a time. Much of the book is made up of dialogues and speeches in which characters with names like Howler, Bawler, Truth-teller and Schizophrenic severally advance their theories about the degree to which the Ibanskian official ideology has been realised in Ibanskian life. This comic symposium of voices echoes the actual history of the way we have always come to be informed about the Soviet Union. Since 1917 there has been incessant argument about whether the Soviet Union is communism gone right, communism gone wrong, or communism not yet arrived. But in Ibansk such a discussion is shown, often by the very terms in which it is conducted, to be camped in the air. Ibanskian society has its own imperatives which ideology exists only to serve.

The first imperative is that mediocrity shall prosper. Those who stand outside or above are dangerous because they are in control of themselves. Moral worth is automatically subject to persecution. The Boss (Stalin) rose to the top because he was a complete nonentity. Hog (Khrushchev) repudiated the Boss only in order to preserve power. In Ibansk the only reason there is no unemployment is that everyone is engaged in the imitation of work. Real work requires a limited number of people, but in the imitation of work there is no limit to the number of people who can be employed. Everything is deliberately kept inefficient. Inefficiency leads you 'to reduce to a minimum your number of contacts with people on whom you depend for anything; i.e., it leads in the final analysis to a self-imposed restriction of demand' (p284).

Few protest because nearly all are involved. Truth-teller (Solzhenitsyn) and the other dissidents are wrong to suppose that the government is oppressing the people. The government is expressing the people's will. Even the intelligentsia polices itself. With mediocrity the universal norm, material inequality is more important than ever. By struggling for their fair share of unfair advantages, the intelligentsia put a trump card into the hands of the leadership and automatically eliminate potential trouble-makers from among their own number.

In Ibansk the leaders are decorated for being leaders and then decorated again for being decorated. Whatever is achieved is achieved in spite of them. 'But things still get done. They can't all be like that.' 'They are all like that.' (p371.) In the arts, the mere fact of becoming known is a guarantee of bad faith. The sculptor Dauber (based on Zinoviev's friend Ernst Neizvestny) spends most of the book trying to be defiant. He ends up carving busts of the Leader out of snotoplast and turdotron, convincing himself that he is carving them in a defiant way. 'The whole horror of our existence lies in the grandiose scale and inescapability of triviality' (p481). Ibansk is one big yawn.

The above hardly begins to summarise the elaborately detailed picture Zinoviev paints of life in Ibansk. But the reader can already see that this is a fantasy whose inspiration lies in the real world. One's estimation of the book will mainly depend on whether one feels the correspondence between Ibansk and the Soviet Union to be exact. And surely, by and large, it is. 'An amoral society wastes a huge amount of energy' (p800). Like Ibansk, the Soviet Union purposely squanders its own human resources. The destruction of talent is not incidental to the system of administration. It is fundamental. Stalin's career, to take the most extreme possible example, can't be explained in terms of variations in ideology.

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Variations in ideology have to be explained in terms of Stalin's career, which was solely devoted to eliminating every trace of human individuality which could not be brought under the regime's direct control. Tolstoy's portrait of Napoleon in *War and Peace* is a possible literary ancestor of the idea that the man of destiny can be a cipher. Solzhenitsyn took the same line about Stalin in *The First Circle*. But really such a view needs no credentials. In the case of Stalin it is simply right. After the early disasters in World War II it became evident that Stalin's brains were made out of the same clay as his feet. But just because the fact became evident did not mean that it could be acted on or even admitted.

Again, Zinoviev is surely right about what Sakharov has called 'the full tragedy of creative life' in the Soviet Union. To speak only of the arts, and of the arts to speak only of literature, it can be taken for granted that any writer over the last 50 years who has not been persecuted by the State is simply not worth reading. Learning to read Russian brings rich benefits, but the prospective student should be warned that he will not be able to retain any comfortable illusions he might have about this century being as fruitful as the last. It is like walking out of a garden into a desert. The catastrophe was already in the making before Stalin came to power. Those gullible Western authors who go on junkets to Moscow and Leningrad at the invitation of the Soviet Writers' Union, and who come home to declare themselves impressed with how *many* poets are published in *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, and how *many* copies of his new book a Soviet poet is accustomed to see printed, are kept safe by the language barrier, as well as by their natural obtuseness, from realising that the Writers' Union is an organisation which exists in order to seek out talent and make certain that it is expunged.

Zinoviev deals harshly with Yevtushenko, who appears in *The Yawning Heights* as Snottyhanky, 'the favourite of young people, the secret police and the Americans' *(passim)*. Yevtushenko is such a preening booby that it is easy to be tempted into feeling superior to him. A sceptical inner voice should warn us that in the same circumstances we might be even more glad than he obviously is to accept a privileged position as the crowd-pleasing bard with a licence to be just so irreverent and no more. But the point to make is that the real poets are condemned to silence. The same applies to every other area of Soviet artistic life. Even the performing artists are allowed to achieve eminence only on the understanding that they will be given no new material worth performing. It was easy to be happy for the Panovs when they reached the West but impossible to admire the ballets they brought with them. Soviet creative life is 'a tragedy of unrealised possibilities' (p547).

According to Zinoviev, the Soviet Union is not a society which has fallen short of its ideals. It embodies them. As a linguistic philosopher with something of Karl Kraus's gift for dissecting rhetoric, Zinoviev is able to show that communist theory has always been nothing but a project. The social laws governing Soviet communism are to be deduced only from what actually goes on in the Soviet Union. This proposition, central to Zinoviev's thought, is expounded at length in a second book, *Svetloe Budushchee*, which has not yet been published in English. The Russian and French editions were both published by L'Age d'Homme last year. In French the book is called *L'Avenir Radieux* and in English it will probably be called *The Shining Future.* It tells the story of an academic whizz-kid doing what he has to do in order to get on. A friend of his writes a treatise about the real nature of Soviet life. These two main characters can be thought of as incarnating the two sides of the argument that must have raged in Zinoviev's head when he found he could no longer put up with his own success. 'Communist society', argues the friend, 'can be thought of only insofar as it is an empirical phenomenon, and not as an abstract system'.

But not even a man as clever as Zinoviev can quite escape the debilitating effects of the life he so brilliantly describes. Like Solzhenitsyn, he has to a certain extent been infected by the very absolutism which he condemns. He is hard on the dissidents. He gives them credit for bravery in such a terrible battle, but says that in the end they help to buttress the state. This is a neat argument but it is open to the same objections which Zinoviev, possibly following Popper, makes to Marxism: there is no conceivable way of disproving it. Anything that opposes the Soviet state buttresses the Soviet state as long as the Soviet state is still there. Here Zinoviev fails to take the historical view, which must always allow for the unexpected consequences of actions. Moral opposition might serve the totalitarian state in the short term but could well undermine it in the long. Nor is Sakharov's standpoint to be so summarily belittled. Sakharov, who has been through all the same degrading experiences as Zinoviev, has never lost sight of the possibility that the Soviet leaders, while deaf to moral arguments, might well be obliged to allow a measure of liberalism when it becomes clear that without it the Soviet Union will no longer be able to maintain itself as a first-rate power.

Zinoviev is unfair not just to the dissidents but to the intelligentsia as a whole. There can be no doubt that for Soviet artists and academics life is largely as squalid as he portrays it. But the few persecuted far outweigh their many persecutors, and it is a kind of materialism to suppose otherwise. Since Gumilyev's murder in 1921 the Russian intelligentsia have been living in a nightmare. Without exception the outstanding talents have been killed, silenced, or exiled. The good work that has survived is scarcely a hundredth part of what would have been there if things had been different. It has been a cultural disaster without parallel in history. Yet does anybody suppose that names like Gumilyev, Akhmatova, Pasternak and the Mandelstams mean less because of it? They mean more. Nadezhda Mandelstam willed her dead husband's poems to a just future. Even if it could be proved that such a future will never come, would her gesture mean nothing? It would still mean everything.

Most unfortunately of all, Zinoviev is hard on the ordinary people of the Soviet Union. By suggesting that they are unusually compliant, he comes close to resurrecting the 'mysterious Russian soul' which he is ordinarily at pains to say does not exist. If Soviet society is as he describes it, then there is no mystery about why most people collaborate with the authorities. Most people are not heroes. It is fancy talk to suggest that they are sharing power. They are sharing powerlessness.

Solzhenitsyn is right to insist that the Soviet government is an imposition, and Zinoviev is wrong to imply, even as a comic exaggeration, that nobody is innocent. Zinoviev says himself that the social laws of the Soviet Union have to be seen from the outside if you are to make sense of them. Seen from the inside, they are impenetrable. On this particular point, Zinoviev probably still feels himself to be an insider. When he was dismissed from Moscow University his friends and colleagues demanded that he be stripped of his medals. He can be excused for taking a sour view of his fellow man.

But in those areas where Zinoviev is uncharitable his arguments refute themselves. Probably it was only an element of self-contempt that ever led him to advance them. By a process which *The Yawning Heights* describes in vivid terms, merely to grow up in the Soviet Union is to be compromised. Zinoviev should take heart. The mere existence of this book shows that to dissent is worthwhile; that the intelligentsia, of which he is a worthy representative, maintains its real traditions, despite all; and that not even the Soviet Union can be entirely confident about its ability to obliterate individual thought. 'A society which officially adopts the slogan that the interests of the people transcend those of the individual is a lawless society. And that's all there is to it' (p575). The proposition is simple but hard to take in. Nobody wants to believe that all those millions of innocent people died in agony for nothing. Not even *The Gulag Archipelago* could get the message across if you didn't want to listen. But Zinoviev has found a way of joking about it, and nothing travels further or faster than a joke.

Philip Larkin

Things Noticed

The Personal Notebooks of Thomas Hardy
edited by Richard H. Taylor *Macmillan* £15

Not many people would think that the late Duke of Windsor had much in common with Thomas Hardy. But seemingly Hardy himself thought so:

> It was a hot day, and the whole episode might well have proved fatiguing and irksome to a man of Hardy's years and retiring nature, but owing to the thoughtfulness of the Prince and his simple and friendly manner, *in essentials so like Hardy's own*, all passed off pleasantly.

The italicised words were excised from Hardy's published account of his luncheon with the Prince of Wales in 1923 (later immortalised in Max Beerbohm's poem), but are now resurrected through the patience of Dr Taylor, who in addition to editing four of Hardy's surviving notebooks has also assembled all the passages omitted from the final version of the *Life*. It was the prospect of this sort of thing that led to the bonfires at Max Gate, in which Hardy before his death, and his widow after, consigned to the flames quantities of papers that might have thrown light on aspects of or incidents in his life that he preferred to keep private.

It follows that what has survived, as Dr Taylor points out in his informative introduc-

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tion to the present volume, is largely what Hardy allowed to survive. He left 11 notebooks: six are snippets from other writers or newspapers ('A Shorthorn cow – the highest price ever given was for "The Duchess of Geneva" – 7000 guineas') and are being published in Sweden. A seventh is in the keeping of R. L. Purdy, the Hardy scholar. The remaining four are reproduced here in their entirety, with a wealth of footnotes to illuminate Hardy's often-laconic references, and there is a substantial appendix of the most significant passages omitted from the posthumously-published autobiography. The resultant compilation is a valuable addition to our knowledge of Hardy marginalia.

The notebooks have little in common. The earliest, 'Schools of Painting', dates from May 1863 and is the shortest. It is very much the record of a young man's efforts at self-education ('Perrugino – hard & dry, but graceful of charm & colour'), but gives little evidence of personal taste (Pollaiuolo, incidentally, is misread as Pollainolo on page 105). The 'Trumpet-Major Notebook', some 15 years later, is much more interesting, and has already been the subject of scholarly study.

As a child, Hardy had pored over a periodical history of the Napoleonic wars, and Dr Taylor suggests that the period was in Hardy's mind when writing *The Return of the Native* in 1877-8 (it contains many appropriate references); certainly in the following year he paid several visits to the British Museum and sedulously assembled a great many extracts from newspapers, histories and biographies of the time. The result is a rich and evocative assortment: Hardy noted that a trumpet major must have a laced hat for Sundays, and that 'his trumpet sling is of red and silver', but the 70-odd pages here printed supply a wealth of detail and anecdote that served Hardy as a source of material whenever he wrote of the period. There are descriptions of drill and uniforms, drawings of grates and teapots, notes on female fashions ('White Chip bonnets greatly in vogue'), and a mass of jottings on George III at Weymouth and the Battle of Trafalgar. Clearly the first decade of the century held a powerful fascination for Hardy, in something of the same way as the Edwardian age and the first world war do for us today.

It is the remaining two books, however ('Memoranda I and II'), that hold the primary interest, for they cover virtually the whole of Hardy's working life as a writer. The first is an anthology of earlier notebooks dating from 1867 to 1920 which supplied many quotations for the *Life* and were then presumably destroyed. The second is dated 1923, and continues the selection from notebooks of 1920-22, but then turns into a semi-diary for the years up to Hardy's death in 1928. Much of what they contain is familiar to readers of the *Life*, and a version of them was published in 1955, though this is said by Dr Taylor to hold 'many inaccuracies'. They make compelling reading of an extraordinary variety. There is the pure film-shot:

> July. Young man – fair, light chestnut moustache; straight Apollo nose, firm chin, red lips, handsome mouth, dark eyes – with a young lady. She wound up her umbrella & fastened it. He gently drew it from her hand, coolly unfastened it, shook it out, & rolled it up his way, twisting it round lightly in his hand & making it smaller by half, as he gives it back to her. She smiles, just showing her teeth.

There is the kind of reflection we call Hardyesque, but which is most often universal:

> Dawn. Lying just after waking. The sad possibilities of the future are more vivid then than at any other time.

Some natural observations carry an aesthetic melodrama:

> A brazen sun, bristling with a thousand spines, which struck into & tormented my eyes . . . Rain: like a banner of gauze waved in folds across the scene.

And on 17 March 1918 there is a cure for diarrhoea (milk, rice, brandy and dry biscuits). It is odd to think of Hardy carefully transcribing it for posterity, but such entries maintain the book's authenticity. The concern he had for his surviving image was refreshingly free from any desire to inflate it.

The notion that Hardy was a recluse has long been expelled; he was in fact a social man, and when in the last decade of his life his age kept him at home his appetite for company remained undiminished, as the second notebook demonstrates. It is something at 83 to sit down to lunch with 'Bernard & Mrs Shaw & Col Lawrence', or extend hospitality to Middleton Murry and Lady Ottoline Morrell. But he is faithful to the past: 24 November was 'Annivy of E's birth, M's death'; 'Mother died 20 years ago today'; and impatient as ever of sophistries:

> 'Truth is what will work' said Wm James. A worse corruption of language was never perpetrated.

The entries become briefer, and Dr Taylor's annotations more valuable. When Hardy records the death of the last of the seven Moule brothers, a footnote reminds us that in their youth he and Hardy had 'dived from a boat on summer mornings into the green water of Weymouth Bay', and often a plain remark will mask a hinterland of emotion.

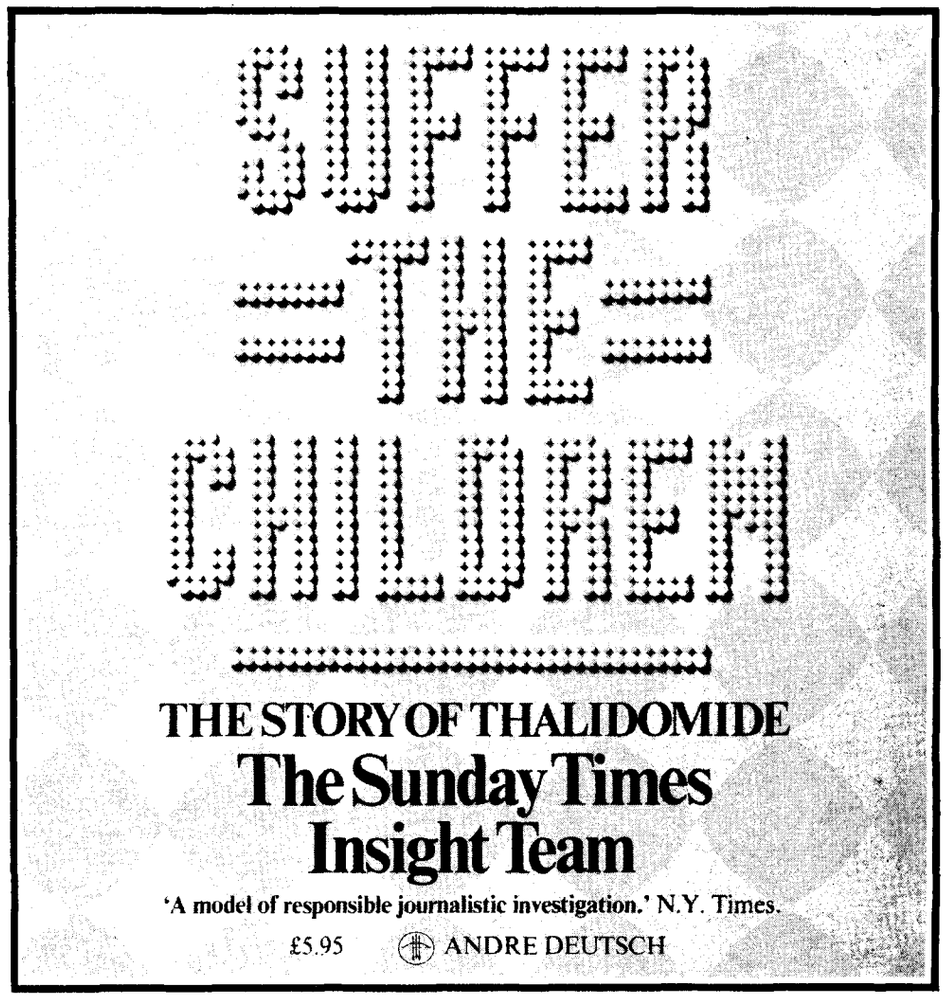
Dr Taylor provides a separate introduction for the omitted passages, in which he traces the history of the *Life*'s anonymity, and summarises their nature. It is not entirely clear who omitted what: no doubt Florence Hardy deleted references to the first Mrs Hardy and other women of his acquaintance, just as Hardy changed 'little dwelling' to 'rambling dwelling' when speaking of his birthplace, but other kinds of cancellation – lists of social encounters, or hyper-sensitive passages about critics – are not as readily ascribable. The coinage 'Tessimism' annoyed Hardy ('I think I discern in this bit of smart journalism the fine Roman hand of A. Lang'), but his sense of proportion was never upset for long:

> The tune of many critics of my book:—
> First edition. Poor fellow: it is a fair piece of work. We'll give him a little encouragement.
> Second edition. H'm. He's making some noise.
> Third edition. Why should he be thought of more than we?
> Fourth edition. Miserable impostor! We must slaughter a rascal who is lording it over all of us like this!

But there are no major revelations that might change our estimate of his character. The last tantalising omission is left unexplained: Hardy remained unconscious until a few minutes before the end,

> when a few broken sentences, one of them heart-rending in its poignancy, showed that his mind had reverted to a sorrow of the past.

Florence wrote this, then deleted it. It is a crowning irony that Hardy's last words should survive only in this way.



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A. S. Byatt

Downstream

The Innocence of Dreams by CHARLES RYCROFT *Hogarth Press* £6.95

Charles Rycroft is a psychoanalyst who has shown an interest in the conscious activity of the healthy mind, as well as a remarkably wise and tactful capacity for vivid description of the thought processes of the deranged. His purpose in *The Innocence of Dreams* is to examine dreams as part of a process of imagination which is 'a natural, normal activity of an agent or self'. Later he discloses another latent theme, 'an exploration of the source or origin of creative activity'. He hopes to relate Freud on dreams to Coleridge on the Imagination, and so discusses, besides Freud and Jung, a number of dreams really dreamed, and the relationship between dreams, the human body, culture and poetry.

Freud, Dr Rycroft says, believed his major discovery was the existence of two kinds of mental functioning – the primary and secondary processes. The primary works with symbols, hallucinations and visual images, following no rules of logic, space or time. The secondary process is conscious thought governed by reason, respect for grammar and logic, part of the formation of a healthy, well-adapted personality. Freud, for whom dreams were crucial evidence of the existence of the primary process, described this process as archaic, primitive, and maladaptive: dreams he initially classified as neurotic symptoms, wish-fulfilling hallucinations, or distorted symbolic images of repressed fantasy. 'The range of things given symbolic representation in dreams is not wide,' he said, and instanced 'the human body as a whole, parents, children, brothers and sisters, birth, death, nakedness – and something else besides.' The 'something else' is sex and its processes. Dr Rycroft concludes that a major theme of our dreaming is indeed the nature of our bodily fate and identity – ancestry, birth, sex, posterity, death. But he finds Freud's descriptions of the processes of symbol-forming unsatisfactory.

The aspect of Jung's theory Dr Rycroft is most concerned with is the putative Collective Unconscious which, as well as the personal unconscious, sends us messages and manifestations in dreams. It is the active agent: we are passive. 'One does not dream: one is dreamed.' Dr Rycroft is sympathetic to the attempt to account for the sense that the creator of the events, or images of our dreams is, like Groddeck's It, not ourselves, but feels that there are good enough biological reasons for the recurrence of certain images in different times and cultures without invoking a Collective Unconscious. One reason why many writers, including myself, seem to prefer Freud's fleshly pessimism to the apparently more aesthetically and culturally enriching Jungian archetypes is given by Lionel Trilling in his excellent essay 'Freud, Within and Beyond Culture', where Trilling argues that Freud's respect for 'a hard, irreducible stubborn core of biological urgency and biological necessity, and biological *reason*, that culture cannot reach . . .' is actually a liberating force in the face of cultural and political determinisms.

Dr Rycroft too admires Freud's biological courage, but doubts whether the relationship between primary and secondary processes is as sharply divided, or as simple, as Freud described it. He points out that Freud seems not to have thought with visual images when awake, and that he confessed that his own dreams were 'less rich in sensory images than I am led to suppose is the case in other people'. Dr Rycroft adduces Galton's 1883 findings in support of the idea that an absence of mental imagery accompanying thought is common among scientists and intellectuals. John Beer, in *Coleridge the Visionary* (1959), on the contrary, cites the famous case of Kékulé's vision of atoms forming the shape of a serpent devouring its tail, as an example, among others, of a scientist thinking with images rather than words or logical signs, and relates it to Coleridge's interest in dream, reverie, ocular spectra, and other such phenomena as modes of thought.

Freud, as Dr Rycroft points out, inherited a scientific language and attitude which predated the discoveries of Einstein, linguistic philosophy, and modernist art, which, partly indebted to him, exploited the modes of illogic, dream, symbol, and non-representation. Freud made an anatomical 'model' of the psyche – Id, Ego and Superego – itself a metaphor and verbal symbol. This led to various difficulties: the tendency to classify symbols and dreams as abnormal and neurotic symptoms, products of the inaccessible and irrational and amoral Id, led to the classification, at one stage, of art as a product also of maladjustment and neurosis. Dr Rycroft patiently qualifies and redefines the description of the relationship between images, language, thought, consciousness and unconsciousness. Not all dreams, or all meanings are, as he points out, inaccessible to the dreamer. He discusses 'punning' dreams which 'like waking puns . . . reveal the existence of phonetic connections between ideas and images which cut across their logical connections'.

He discusses dreams in which metaphors, dead or live, are made actual by the visionary embodiment of vehicle and tenor: a woman 'puts her shirt' on a lover, and finds 'more fish in the sea'. In an earlier book, *Imagination and Reality*, he discussed the symbolic nature of the whole activity of psychoanalysis, including particularly the language both analyst and patient use. In this book he tries to replace the ideas of primary and secondary processes by those of discursive and non-discursive symbolism and comes much nearer to describing, by this means, the relations between the language of sleep and waking, than the early analysts did. From here he connects the *intended* dreams of patients in analysis, to those of peoples whose cultures expect them to have certain dreams at certain rites of passage, and to art. One can 'dream towards' a work of art, or even a work of analytic thought, as I know.

It is our loss that Dr Rycroft, whilst (somewhat dubiously) attaching Coleridge's difficult concepts of the Primary and Secondary Imaginations to his own distinctions does not examine Coleridge's psychological work, in the Notebooks, and elsewhere, on the nature of dreaming. Coleridge was fascinated by the '*streamy* nature of association' in dreams, uncontrolled by the will, and saw this powerlessness as a possible point of entry for evil in man. He had inherited a strong evangelical conscience and a weak will. Dr Rycroft considers Freud's Id, 'a chaos, a cauldron, filled with energy . . . with no organisation, no collective will . . . contrary impulses exist side by side . . . no judgment of value, no good and evil, no morality . . .' This, he says, defining by negatives and analogy an entity whose only positive attribute is energy, is like the God of apophatic or negative theology. From here, by a verbal sleight of hand which is pleasing rather than irritating, he proceeds to claim that 'there is something about the imagination . . . that can only be stated in negative terms'.

And this brings him, inevitably, to Keats's Negative Capability, 'of being in uncertainties, mysteries, doubts, without any irritable reaching after fact or reason'. This is a state of mind, he points out, which is 'the exact opposite to that of the healthy, well-adapted ego sanctified by Freudian theory'. Coleridge, too, although it is he who is being criticised by Keats for irritable reaching, wrote of the imaginative apprehension of *Paradise Lost* as 'that *illusion*, contradistinguished from *delusion*, that *negative* faith, which simply permits the images present to work by their own force, without either denial or affirmation of their existence by the judgment'.

Psychoanalytical descriptions of 'creativity' are, I have found, usually unsatisfactory and somehow beside the point. Dr Rycroft's comes at the end of an elegantly written book in which his clear, gnomic prose, his rigorous sense of order, his grip on the various languages of dream imagery, science, theology, logic and art, give his own work some of the quality of a poem, dissolving, diffusing and dissipating in order to recreate. He describes the creative person as one who 'lacks that sense of opposition between their Ego and both the outside world and their own unconscious . . .' someone who, neither identifying masculinity with action, nor femininity with passion, 'can oscillate between active and passive states of being, between objectivity and subjectivity, without feeling that their identity is threatened'. With an ego so relaxed and unarmoured, such people can mediate between their private symbols and those of their culture. This conclusion could look misleadingly glib in a review: in this book it is achieved and worked for. Dr Rycroft has his own symbol for the imaginative life – Hopkins's Windhover, riding the air, active and passive in its element.

Among this week's contributors:

CLIVE JAMES's most recent collection of essays was *At the Pillars of Hercules* (Faber).

PETER PORTER's latest collection of poems, *The Cost of Seriousness*, was published by Oxford last year.

A. S. BYATT's *The Virgin in the Garden*, published last year, is the first in a sequence of four novels.

HELEN MCNEIL teaches English and American studies at the University of East Anglia.

KINGSLEY AMIS's most recent novel was *Jake's Thing* (Hutchinson).

EDWINELLA PYGGE was for a short time a trainee adviceperson at the Louella Parsons Institute of Affairs.

CRAIG RAINE's second collection of poems, *A Martian Sends a Postcard Home*, will be published by Oxford in November.

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Roger Woddis

Scousefrau

The Memoirs of Bridget Hitler edited by Michael Unger *Duckworth* £4.95

How thorny is the path they tread
Who try to disinter the dead,
And how beset by traps the sleuth
Determined to unearth the truth.
Some readers may believe this book
Deserves a long and trusting look,
While others, sceptic to a fault,
Will take it with a pinch of salt.

It seems there was a Dublin Miss
Who met and married Alois,
Half-brother to the man who later
Became the not-so-great Dictator.
Her name was Bridget Dowling (née),
Until her fateful wedding-day,
When life, that clown in cap and bells,
Inspired the story that she tells.

Her memoirs, published now in full,
Describe those months in Liverpool,
Where Adolf Hitler, not so daft,
Had journeyed to escape the draft.
In 1912, despite the rain,
They met him off the Lime Street train,
An apt case for an analyst.
He nearly drove them round the twist;
He lay in bed for half the day,
Until, when he'd outlived his stay,
His brother, who could stand no more,
Exclaimed, '*Mein Gott*, you're twenty-four!
Why don't you leave, or take a job?
Get out and graft, you lazy slob!'
But Adolf, showing scant concern,
Replied, 'I first must English learn.'

In 1913 Adolf left
For Munich, and his hosts, bereft
Of sanity and near despair,
Were more than glad to pay his fare.
What follows – Bridget tells it all
With total and undimmed recall –
Includes a loving son called Pat,
Who sometimes knew what he was at;
A foreign tour (she sang, you see)
With Harry Lauder's company;
But central to this masterpiece
Is Adolf's fondness for his niece,
A girl called Geli who, it seems,
Awoke his love and filled his dreams.
Alas, the girl was shot and died,
A case of so-called suicide,
Though Bridget thinks there's little doubt
That Uncle Adolf rubbed her out.

We learn of Hitler's little quirks:
His passion for detective works,
His faith in what the stars foretell,
The way he ate his food as well,
His love of films and German dogs –
All this and more she catalogues.
He thought (the evidence is slim)
That every woman fancied him.

All this may be a load of bull,
But Bridget broods on Liverpool.
A question preys upon her mind:
She asks herself, 'If I'd been kind,
Would Adolf's plans have come to naught?'
What, no Third Reich? Now there's
a thought.

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Frederic Raphael

Rolando Furioso

A Lover's Discourse by ROLAND BARTHES translated by Richard Howard *Cape* £6.95

Aimez-vous Barthes? He is, I suppose, the most formidable (in the true, frightening, sense of the word) of French intellectuals. His manner is at once direct and elusive; he has none of the garrulity of Sartre or the evangelistic clarity of René Girard. You read his pronouncements over and over, promising yourself that his brevity entails wit as well as wisdom. Even when he writes about himself, as he did in a little book recently, it is with an anti-autobiographical life-style quite devoid of that winsomeness Anglo-Saxons call modesty. He is an etymologist and a dandy. '*M. Barthes, je vous aime*' is certainly easier to say, on his public showing, than '*Roland, je t'aime*'.

It is, however, with the particular world of passion that he is now dealing, Racine's *fureur*. The French have a long habit of polarising *amour* and *mariage* – a hangover, one assumes, from the troubadours, and also from the days when marriages were arranged regardless of the feelings of the coupled couple: one went to bed as one went to war, because one's elders conscripted one to do so. French lovers are unlikely to be married, at least to each other (*Cousin Cousine* is the latest, export version of the evidence). M. Barthes' study of the terminology of love scarcely mentions wedlock, except in relation to that strange complicity between rivals celebrated in Dostoyevsky's *The Eternal Husband*, on which both Freud and René Girard – in his *Des Choses Cachées Depuis La Fondation du Monde* – dwell rather more interestingly. M. Barthes' amorous handbook is a sort of anatomy of romantic melancholy. Love, not sex, is the topic; this is a pathology, not a physiology.

What happens when we fall in love? As La Rochefoucauld pointed out, many men would never do so at all, unless they had heard that they should. (One can volunteer to become a victim of the involuntary.) Love is mimetic; it requires a model and a vocabulary. Goethe's *Werther* is the prime text here, a seminal novel which, I admit, I have never read, though I do now feel as though I have. The drive towards suicide is a renowned romantic highway, once so busy with one-way traffic that Goethe was accused by a lordly English bishop of depopulating the reading public. He replied with bookish callousness: 'Your commercial system has claimed thousands of victims, why not grant a few to *Werther*?' Nothing could more clearly announce the distinction between Goethe and his supposed *alter ego*. For, as Barthes points out, the 'cured' lover is, by definition, no longer in love; unless he is cured, he cannot write, and cured he cannot love. Love, viewed with the mandarin essentialism of the etymologist, is a madness.

It is also a somewhat unfashionable, because tender, subject for the critical heavyweight. (Christopher Ricks on *Keats and Embarrassment* treats nicely of this.) Its vocabulary is tarnished with triteness; '*Je t'aime*' is the tale-teller's tell-tale phrase which declares that a story is not serious. M. Barthes' mock-solemnity in the elucidation of his glossary is an ironic reference to the great dictionary of received ideas on which Bouvard and Pécuchet once embarked. The French reputation for being expert lovers is, of course, the most eagerly received of all, in every *couche sociale*. A hitch-hiking French soldier told me recently that all Englishmen were homosexual and all Englishwomen frustrated. I advised him to seek a lift in the opposite direction: the Channel ports, on his *analyse*, ought to be crammed with English females in a heated state of availability. '*C'est ce qu'on dit quand même*,' he said, fastening his seat-belt.

M. Barthes furnishes his lover's world with few contingent elements: a café, a telephone, the post and 'holidays' (the French having an obsession concerning their whereabouts in July and August which more superstitious races reserve for the destination of their immortal souls), never a bed; it is what happens in the mind that matters. Anguish is the hallmark: the lover, M. Barthes defines prettily, is the one who waits. He has nothing to do with children or the family. He craves a world of two, or three. (Rather more brutally, André Malraux said that the attraction of eroticism was that it enabled you to escape your era.) Such is the sly ambiguity of French, which makes *l'amour* masculine, that there is a strong hint that homosexual love provides the paradigm here. The homosexualisation of all sexuality is perhaps a feature of the post-pill world: safety is now clinically prescribable, hence it needs no marital hutch, no bonded pairing. Pleasure supplants happiness. Permanence, relieved of its institutional trappings, becomes once again the impossible and romantic dream, not the mortifying norm.

M. Barthes is a joker with very few laughs. He puts his pieces in alphabetical order, lest a random display carry implications of the collagist's artfulness. There are many felicities and a little bathos: the brothels of Hamburg, with their display-cased ladies, may indeed parade 'the essence of Prostitution', but do we need an intellectual guide to the topography of the obvious? There are also some sentences of a density to rival dead stars:

> . . . there occurs a fall of this Image-repertoire: for the brief interval of a vacillation, I lose my structure as a lover: this is a factitious mourning, without work to do: something like a non-site.

I think that what is meant is that if one's amorous imagination ('*imaginaire*') becomes excessively active, one somehow assimilates the beloved and so destroys her image: there is nothing left to love. This is like putting on a black tie, only to find that there is nobody to bury, or no court to attend. ('*Non-lieu*' refers to a legal situation in which there is no case to answer. Does 'non-site' render this?) The translation suffers (and the reader with it) from its obsequious exactitude. One might have had more fun with less reverence; an English critique would find examples from our literature which could furnish a perspective by incongruity with the French. As it is, the gay deliberations of the mandarin, complete with coy glances at friends – who supply initialled battle-front memories – and a correct apparatus of well-read references, becomes a slightly indented soufflé by the time it has been stamped by Mr Howard's immigration formalities. However, he has performed his self-effacing task with as much dexterity as anyone could be expected to contrive. The fragments retain their curt charm and now and again the cupidinous dart hits the bull smartly enough to provoke an 'ouch' of recognition. Lovers will perhaps ask each other, on the smarter beaches this year, whether they love or like Barthes and will raise the archness of their Marivaudage according to the fervour of the reply. In a topless world where the Gross National Orgasm awaits only the Joy of Necrophilia to complete its comfortable bookshelf, it is amiable to be reminded that elegance and wit, pain and subtlety can also have their sexual parts to play.

Kingsley Amis

Back

Pack My Bag by HENRY GREEN *Chatto* £5.95

Henry Green's career had an extraordinary shape: first novel (quite different from all his others) published when he was 21, second (to my mind the best) when 24, a 10-year gap, seven more novels and an autobiographical work, and a final 21 years of silence; he didn't live by his writing, you see. My crowd read him in the 1940s, when he was still producing, and found him marvellously original in both vision and voice. We quoted to one another the sentence that forms the first paragraph of *Party Going* (1939):

> Fog was so dense, bird that had been disturbed went flat into a balustrade and slowly fell, dead, at her feet.

That reads a bit whimsically now, as does the title: the story is not about going to parties but about a party (of people) that is going (to France, or rather not going because fog has held up all trains). Was what we took for originality no more than mannerism? Four of the novels have been reissued over the last couple of years and the rest are to follow; perhaps Green is due for the second reading he deserves. I hope some of those many young who have never heard of him – his last book came out in 1952, after all – will think him worth a first reading.

The autobiographical *Pack My Bag* is not the place to start. Even ardent Greenians have as far as I know never put it very high. Written in 1938-9 (though covering only the years up to 1927), it suffers from a severe initial defect. This is not just that Green had the feeling, common enough among younger people at the time, that he and everybody else were going to get killed in the war then impending; what grates is that, instead of being content to record the fact that he felt like that and then passing on, he natters about it at intervals all through the book. The reader never knows when he will come to the next moan of self-commiseration. 'Surely it would be asking much to pretend one had a chance to live' –

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come off it, we all had a *chance*. Even in the course of talking about butterfly-collecting, which ought to be a safe enough topic, he follows up explaining how you either gas the buggers or stick them on pins with 'Our difference is, now we are older, we may die both ways at one time.' Oh, but that's not the only difference: we haven't got wings either, or antennae, and lots of other things like that.

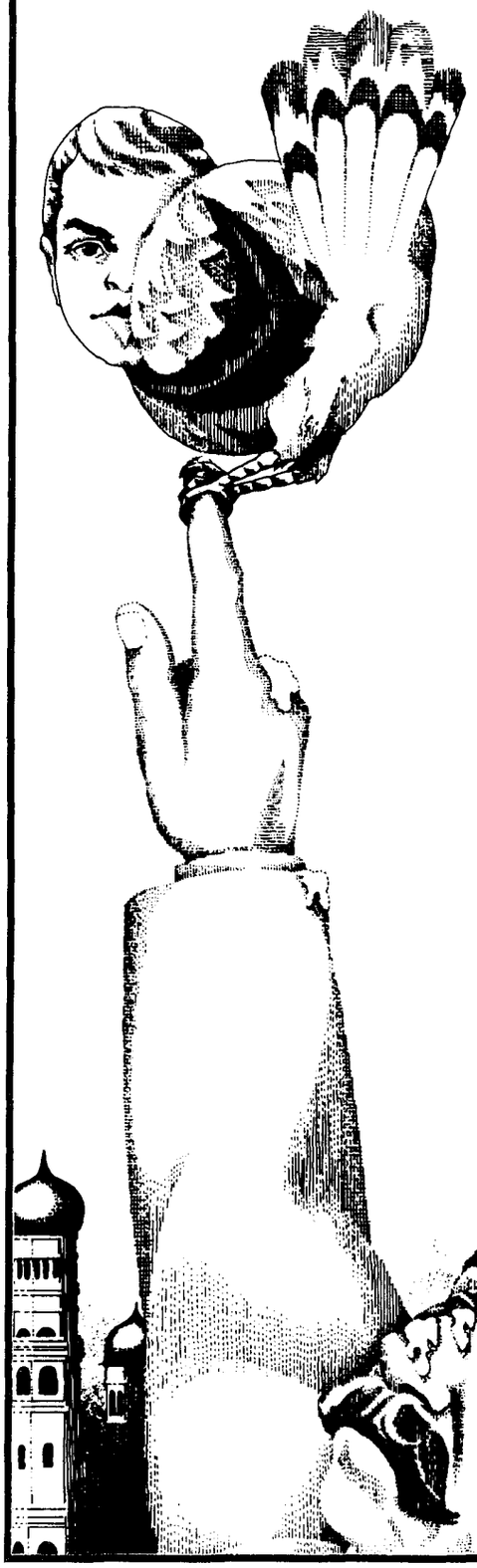
Another weakness cures itself as the book proceeds. Unlike the one in the Larkin poem, Green's childhood was a remembered boredom, a fact which he goes to some lengths in order to prove. 'Is it fair,' he asks, 'to expect people to be interested if it is boring and hard work to put down and probably so dull to read,' – no question-mark, of course. Well, if a thing is probably so dull to read people will probably not be interested in it, sort of by definition, and even more probably when it's shoddily put down too. The early pages, and some of the later ones, might have been dictated at top speed when he was drowsy or drunk (or both), typed up by someone unable to punctuate and never looked at again. Things go in the order he happens to think of them: the fact that you always had boiled eggs was the last detail he remembered about having tea in the town in private-school days, so that appears last, stuck on to the end of a sad little story about a bereaved friend.

Matters improve with some descriptions of holiday pastimes and the account of life at Eton, though the author threw away a valuable card when he took the decision not to name any of the schoolfellows he mentions. The riot on the evening of the Armistice provides a good moment, but the (unintentionally) most interesting bit by far is the statement that at one period he wore *the wrong kind of overcoat*: it came down below the knee. Reflect that Green and Anthony Powell were contemporaries at Eton, and that Jenkins is very evasive, almost deceitful, about the irregularity of Widmerpool's overcoat: he lists no fewer than five different ways in which it might or might not have departed from the norm, almost every possible way, in fact, *except being too long or short*. (Not that Green 'is' Widmerpool or Widmerpool Green, I had better add.)

In his first term, Green's Oxford day began very early, two a.m. or so, when he would be put to bed. Called at noon with an orange and a brandy and soda, he ate fried sole and sausages (always the same, to give his stomach 'less to do'), went and saw a Valentino or Mary Pickford film, wrote a page of his novel and dined out and got drunk again. No doubt he 'felt insane', but what a way to go. One very odd idea he had and apparently retained was that the college hearties refrained from beating him up because he played billiards for the university and they were nervous of injuring him. But then a man who believes that Frenchmen never complain about their livers will believe anything.

The book closes with a too-short account of the two years Green spent on what would now be called the shop floor of his father's factory in Birmingham – no political reason, just curiosity about how most people lived. Here as elsewhere his account of what he saw and heard is worth more than his comments and speculations. But he is first-rate in an earlier passage recalling how adolescent boys feel about girls, in particular how they (the boys) can't believe that they (the girls) could ever actually *like* sex. Takes you back.

ALEXANDER ZINOVIEV
The Yawning Heights



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Peter Porter

The Embattled State

Stravinsky in Pictures and Documents by VERA STRAVINSKY and ROBERT CRAFT *Hutchinson* £16

Stravinsky is the greatest creator of the 20th-century in any of the arts – so far, at least. It may seem silly to make such a categorical statement; it may make little sense to assert a paramount figure among activities so dissimilar as music, literature and the plastic arts; or it may provoke the often-raised protest that intemperate claims say more about the man who makes them than about the artist in whose honour they are made. Despite all such dangers, I believe it is essential to have a centre of conviction in one's estimation of the art of one's time, a point of undoubted greatness from which all hierarchies descend. It is, after all, what we do naturally, and learn not to do only when our minds have been brainwashed academically. So much of what is written today is timid sorting of a scholastic order, a poor imitation of scientific accuracy.

Stravinsky is firmly enough established in the history of European art this century for my claim to be outrageous only in its absolutism; but it is precisely not as a historical figure than he is such a great artist. Historical figures fade before our eyes and have to be rediscovered. Stravinsky is as solidly here as Mozart, and has been ever since *Fireworks* in 1908. Because he lived so long and in an age consciously given to keeping archives of its great men, we know much more about him than we do about Bach or Mozart. Yet we should not be misled by this: we also know his music as well as we do Bach's and Mozart's. History would have us view Stravinsky according to its own dubious canons – could there be a more thorough vindication than the career of *Le Sacre du Printemps* after its scandalous premiere?

There is certainly plenty of history to learn: Stravinsky was in the public eye for over 50 years; he had a Russian period, a long Neo-Classic period and he was converted to serial composition in the last two decades of his life. And there are a thousand ways of refining and breaking down these broad categories into discussable departments. He has been written about continuously by critics and journalists, and has published the most comprehensive set of self-interviews by any artist since Goethe talked to Eckermann. He has also recorded the greater part of his output in reasonably modern sound, probably the first composer ever to do so (though it will become the rule, as the examples of Britten, Henze and Stockhausen show). He left behind such a mass of material that the best way to clarify it is to become acquainted with it all, but only if you know and love the music first. Stravinsky had a brilliant mind, but none of his aperçus is worth very much if one doesn't know his music.

Robert Craft makes an essential observation when he says that despite Stravinsky's habit of stressing the necessity for rules in art, his own rules were those of thumb. He wrote great music naturally, and he found his precedents afterwards. Anything could be turned to use in a composition – he heard, looked, read, and was stimulated, and his brain was so finely musical it made of the stuff he offered it new and successful compositions. This is what makes Constant Lambert's famous attack on him for time-travelling in *Music Ho* so irrelevant. Lambert was much more intelligent than most of Stravinsky's critics and many of his supporters too, but made the mistake of seeing only the apparent or editorial surface of Stravinsky's invention. It might have been thought that Lambert's jokey forecast that Stravinsky would end up writing Neo-Grieg was realised in *Norwegian Moods* ten years later, but the sound landscape of this work is quite unlike Grieg and different from all other Stravinsky pieces as well. All Stravinsky's models become Stravinsky, and no influence ever emerges as expected. Lambert would not have guessed that one of Stravinsky's last works would be an instrumentation of songs by Hugo Wolf. Even the models one thinks one can discern in certain compositions turn out not to be the ones he used. Craft reveals that the scores Stravinsky was studying during the composition of *Apollo* were from the Viennese classics and not Delibes.

The miracle is that wherever the sound-pieces come from, they fit together to make compact and classical compositions. No artist has a more perfect sense of form, yet there is no Stravinskian formula or set of aesthetic rules. What would, in most composers' hands, be a well-set mosaic at best, is, with him, an organic composition. He can afford to be so ready-made in his inspiration (he described his method once as resembling a Schwitters Merzbild) because his creative instinct is so strong. This is too much for history-dominated commentators like Boulez, who have to pick and choose fastidiously in his complete works since they are allergic to certain styles. Some Stravinsky compositions are greater than others, but not on stylistic grounds alone, and to love the *Symphonies of Wind Instruments* and feel polluted by the *Violin Concerto* is to have an insufficiently robust and imaginative mind.

The question a reviewer has to ask himself, faced with this enormous and discursive book (665 pages and hundreds of plates, many in colour) is – does it add significantly to the already extensive public accounts of Stravinsky, the Craft conversations, the *Poetics of Music*, the autobiography and the many memoirs by friends and colleagues? The answer is a firm yes, if you have the music properly in mind. Otherwise, it might be overwhelming or seem like the higher gossip, since Stravinsky spent so much of his life among people who were remorselessly chic, though often genuinely in awe of his abilities. There is a certain amount of overlap with the Stravinsky/Craft dialogues and Craft's *Chronicle of a Friendship*, but less than I expected. Indeed, the odd feeling which kept returning to me as I read these thousands of words was a hunger for further facts, a sense

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that important matters had passed before I knew all I needed to know about them.

For instance, the authors often announce a new composition by recording the earliest date of any sketches for it in Stravinsky's notebooks, but this needs amplifying in terms of extra-notational sources. We know that Stravinsky, though he had heard and admired *Pierrot Lunaire* in Berlin before the First War, was largely ignorant of Schoenberg's music until Craft introduced him to it. His own way with serial technique is not like Schoenberg's, so it would be interesting to be given more information than we are in this book about the origins of the *Cantata on Old English Lyrics* of 1951-52. Craft writes that Stravinsky had heard some of Schoenberg's music as well as discussion about it in Europe in 1951, while elsewhere he has written that Stravinsky listened to Webern's Quartet Opus 22 before composing his setting of 'Tomorrow shall be my dancing day', the first of his pieces influenced by serial processes of composition. *The Rake's Progress*, high water mark of his Neo-Classicism, had been performed less than six months previously, so this setting marks the clear beginning of Stravinsky's late career. Craft scrupulously mentions the serial works by the Second Viennese School which Stravinsky heard, but says nothing about the selection of the text, nor about the emotional and aesthetic conviction which must have preceded the movement of this one great pole of 20th-century music towards its anti-pole (Schoenberg).

Perhaps these are private matters or concerns which cannot be elucidated in words, but some consideration of the change would be welcome, and could take the place of much logistic detail (of concert engagements, plane trips, diary entries and social outings). There are many places too where the inessential is stressed and the essential ignored, though in some instances this may be because the matter has been written about elsewhere – for instance, Stravinsky's compositions for the violinist Samuel Dushkin. One has to keep in mind that the layout is partly determined by the many plates and that the text (certainly no coffee-table compilation) has to keep pace with the pictures. Craft and Mrs Stravinsky have chosen to reproduce many of the composer's autographs, which are not only beautifully clear but amount to works of art in their own right. It is very moving to contemplate the 'Lanterloo' chorus from the Brothel Scene of *The Rake's Progress* in Stravinsky's fastidiously written short score. Even more touching is the still-clear but shaky notation of the final page of the Lacrimosa from *Requiem Canticles*, with its wobbly bar lines, presumably due to the composer's hand shaking as he drew them with his five-point nib. The photographs from Stravinsky's early years are particularly interesting. He appears in a wide range of variations on the Dandy, and there are engaging shots of Debussy, Ravel, and the attractive and youthful team of artists attendant on Diaghilev's Ballets Russes.

With no sense of editorial intrusion, Stravinsky's second wife (born Vera de Bosset) emerges as the good spirit of his life. She is pictured with him, both from the time of their companionship in Europe while his first wife was still living, and after their marriage in America in 1940. A short account of her own early years comes as a welcome relief from Stravinsky's biography at a period when it makes the most disturbing reading: 1921 and 1922, the period of 'chercher la femme', as the notes put it. Stravinsky's affairs with several women including Coco Chanel, before his life-long devotion to Vera de Bosset began, are stated plainly, as is his chilly treatment of his first wife and his children. Stravinsky was a bad father: the book does not try to gloss this over. He paid for it at the end of his life when his surviving children showed him only formal concern. It seems to me that none of this is the business of the public, though Stravinsky's lack of generosity towards colleagues perhaps is. Time and time again, one reads dismissive and even brutal remarks about fellow-artists who were, at least nominally, his friends. But genius, even when recognised as early as Stravinsky's was, is an embattled state. Some of the most unflattering and downright silly comments on his compositions collected in this book are taken from letters written by Prokofiev in Paris to Miaskovsky in Russia.

There is no space in a review to give even a short summary of the information this book is stuffed with. The text is enriched with thousands of documents from every kind of source. Debussy sight-reads *Le Sacre* with Stravinsky at the piano; Stravinsky attends a performance of *Petruschka* with Schoenberg; Delius regrets that he cannot attend the rehearsal but promises to be at the premiere of *Le Sacre*; Marinetti, in the Augusteo in Rome, shouts 'Abasso Wagner, viva Stravinsky'; Schoenberg composes his *Three Satires* ('the little Modernsky') after not-meeting Stravinsky in Venice in 1925; Stravinsky is received by Il Duce at the Palazzo Venezia; Stravinsky's medical expenses in 1970 are $100,000; asked to state the authorship of the words of the Pater Noster and the Ave Maria on a PRS form, Stravinsky writes 'Jesus Christ and the Archangel Gabriel'. These are a few of the gossipy plums; there are far more serious matters presented, many of them for the first time. The gestations which led to *The Nightingale*, the *Symphony of Wind Instruments* and *Les Noces* are very fully written up, and all Stravinsky's compositions after *Canticum Sacrum* benefit from Craft's performing experience as well as on-the-spot knowledge. It's a pity that Stravinsky never set the masque *Delia* which Auden and Kallman wrote for him. Nor has the text, which appeared in *Botteghe Oscure* in 1954, been collected into Auden's works.

The central mystery of Stravinsky's personality is not explained, nor could it ever be. Nothing in the sensible and sensitive letters and descriptions which place the young ex-law student and composition pupil of Rimsky-Korsakov before us can prepare for the flowering of genius which began immediately afterwards with *Fireworks* and the *Firebird*. Nor are the early Piano Sonata and Symphony any indication of what was to come. Stravinsky is the most unexpected Minerva in music. He came to maturity early, apparently without any of the usual signs of the gods' devotion, and remained the greatest living composer for more than half a century. He was not especially prolific and it is interesting that all his works are short (*The Rake's Progress* excepted); he left behind almost no unfinished pieces and very few unused sketches. Robert Craft and Vera Stravinsky draw the portrait of a genius quite without the usual distortions of wasted talent, and the warts they make no effort to hide are seen for the unimportant specks they are.

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Edwinella Pygge

Jambes Roll

Beyond Reason by MARGARET TRUDEAU *Paddington Press* £5.50
Related To Sex by CLAIRE RAYNER *Paddington Press* £3.95

Some girls are born great, some achieve greatness, and some have greatness thrusting upon them. Pretty Margaret Trudeau surely belonged to the latter category! Or should I still say 'belongs'? But I mustn't be naughty, must I? Perhaps you would prefer me to say nothing at all. Not everyone likes to admit that Prime Ministers have peenies and can take an interest in a lovely lady. But they can, you know: and the amount of tummy-banana trouble our United States Presidents have sometimes gone through is nobody's business. They are so busy in their lives. So, imagine the turmoil in the semi-retired hormones of bald Catholic solitary Premier Pierre Trudeau (of Canada) when pretty Margaret Sinclair sashayed into his life. Well, it stood to reason, didn't it? You know what I mean.

What a busy begetter Pierre proved to be, to be sure! Three boys in such a short time – the poor girl was pooped, as you or I would have been. (Male readers, most of you, will just have to imagine!) It was not the life she had bargained for when she was born, daughter of the Minister of Fisheries in Lester Pearson's administration, educated at Delbrook Senior High, dated by a Ph.D. in revolutions called Philip – him, not the revolutions – and described by Leonard Cohen as 'every guy's great date'. No sirree. Much less when she fell in love with a summer Yves (do you like puns? I do!), disappeared to Morocco, smoked a lot of silly things and caught some horrid diseases (not the most horrid available, I am glad to say) and came home to be dated by Pierre who, it was said by those that thought they knew (not me, of course) would never marry her. That was not the way the cupcake was intended to disintegrate *at all*. No way.

However, it did, and Margaret gave up smoking and diseases and married her fairy-tale substitute Pop, Pierre Elliott 'Jambes' Trudeau. Pierre is a renowned sweetie who was once given the award of having the most beautiful legs in the world and you may be sure I voted for him. He is a sweetie, it was too bad they broke up: but they did, not before a good deal of maple syrup had flowed under the bridge and three boys, as we have seen, were born.

Margaret has now issued this very reasonably priced request for help. There is every sign that she has gone back to silly smoking again, though at least this will not make significant inroads into her flawless complexion, that of a Georgia peach. I am of course fully prepared to give her all the advice she seeks when she contacts me privately, which I am sure is imminent. Meantime, I can save her the trouble of reading the book by Claire Rayner. I don't think we have much to learn from poor Claire, do you? Fat, rich and garrulous, I think her a pathetic figure, one who can only survive the pressures of existence by getting hundreds of people to write to her every day. It is a tragic need, and fortunate she is that there are so many people in your country who are prepared to cater to it.

Hermione Lee

Fits & Splinters

The Holiday by STEVIE SMITH *Virago* £1.95

The Holiday, first published in 1949, is a spiritual autobiography, a political essay, and an idiosyncratic exercise in poetic prose. Perhaps the closest thing to this strange amalgam is *Sartor Resartus*: and Stevie Smith shares further with Carlyle a violent irritation with hypocrisies and pretensions, a nagging solicitude for her country's state of mind, and a profound apprehension of the Everlasting No: desolation, apathy, 'death-feeling'.

Analogies with the Victorians can well be extended further. Stevie Smith is interested in Tennyson, and in the 'dignity of suffering' which he allows his character in *Maud* and which we now find absurd and enviable. In much of her work there is a peculiar interplay between what she calls (in *Novel on Yellow Paper*) 'loamish Victorian melancholy' and a stern, aloof classicism. Tennyson and Greek tragedy are impressively grafted together in, for instance, 'The House of Over-Dew', a dreadful tale of a gloomy Christian family life and lost love, which appears in prose here and as a poem in *Scorpion*. And the 'plot' of *The Holiday* – Celia's sad visit, on leave from her post-war work at 'the Ministry', to her uncle in Lincolnshire, with the cousin whom she loves but who may be her half-brother – has a mournful Tennysonian atmosphere of family secrets and damp woods.

But Stevie Smith's Victorianism is more than a penchant for Gothic families and Lincolnshire fields. Her religious anxieties seem markedly of the 19th century. In her novels and poems she was perpetually engaged in agonised conflict with the established Church ('Oh Christianity, Christianity/Why do you not answer our difficulties? . . . the consolations of religion are so beautiful/But not when you look close'). She longed to embrace the solution, but it is 'too tidy, too tidy by far'. And the vigorous, satirical authority with which she defines and attacks the English character of the post-war years has, for all its topicality ('England is a country given over to sloth'), almost an Arnoldian ring:

> We are not a sophistical people and are saved the dangers that run with sophism; and our education has not yet succeeded in taking away from us the weapons of our strength – insularity, pride xenophobia and good humour.

These parallels with male Victorian writers may usefully work against the more usual image of Stevie Smith as the fey spinster lady of Palmers Green, all funny hats and pussy cats, which the manner of *The Holiday* does in part bear out. Like *Novel on Yellow Paper* and the poems, it is eccentric, abrupt, playful and mannered. There is a good deal of English whimsy (like Auntie Lion's dress with poppies all over it, which is called 'Every One Cam Up') and a lot of weeping over the awfulness of life. But if the quirky, free-wheeling 'foot-off-the-ground' manner proves attractive rather than irritating, then *The Holiday* will yield up its peculiar treasures.

It gives a clear, bitter picture of middle class intellectual life just after the war, and is remarkably good at political conversations about India, about the effects of German propaganda on the English temperament, about the social impotence of writers. It's also a very funny novel with a caustic eye for office life and suburban comforts, for the poisonous posh rich socialist who admires the countryside in terms of its painters ('One who always comes back to the English school') and for the fearsome upper-class London child:

> 'Did you and Bobby enjoy staying with Mummy?' asked the naïve school-mistress person. 'Did we enjoy staying with Lois?' poses the bored and shattered child, 'perhaps rather, she drinks a bi you know and Paul's cheque didn't come, bu perhaps rather, yes; we aren't supposed to par ticularly.'

It's energetic in praise of independence friendship (particularly between women), and

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professional camaraderie. But it is, principally, a document of suffering, a painfully close account (which serves as an illuminating commentary on the poems) of Celia/Stevie's battles with despair. The death wish is resisted; the novel charts an honourable but tragic compromise: 'Everything in this world is in fits and splinters, like after an air raid when the glass is on the pavements; one picks one's way and is happy in parts.'

Anthony Burgess

Slobadob

Nicknames: Their Origins and Social Consequences by JANE MORGAN, CHRISTOPHER O'NEILL and ROM HARRE *Routledge* £5.95

Of the names you add to a forename like John or Joan there are four kinds: patronymics like Johnson (you can include here metronymics like Margerison); placenames like Hill, Croft or Birmingham; tradenames like Smith or Butcher; and nicknames. A nickname is properly an ickname (as an apron is properly a napron and an orange a norange), the 'ick' being also found as 'eke' and meaning 'also' (compare German *auch*). These also-names began by describing the physical characteristics (Black, White, Armstrong) of their attributees, but, passed on to descendants who had quite different characteristics, they became mere onomastic counters. That, indeed, is true of all Western surnames. If you are a Johnson, you are only probably a son of John in the sense that you are a son of Adam (less remote, true), whereas a boy called Hassan bin (or ibn or ibni) Yusof certainly has a father called Yusof, just as Ivan Ivanovich is the son of Ivan. Nicknames being essentially vivid thumbnail sketches of an appearance or a character (Proude as well as Strongitharm; Trustgood as well as Redhead), they subsist inertly as a kind of mockery of the naming process. Yet, while we are forced by government to inherit our surnames, we are free to forename our children and, outside the covenant of the State, to nickname everybody.

In Wales, where there is a plethora of Joneses and Davises, superaddition of a nickname is essential. Sometimes the nickname – Dai Bread, Tom Black Lion – is a tradename or placename; often it is a nickname in a negative sense – that is, not assignable to any of the three staider categories. I knew a man in Breconshire called Dai Niceun. His real name was Jones and he was English; coming to Wales, he was told he had to be given a nickname. 'I don't mind', he said, 'so long as it's a nice 'un.' In the old colonial territories, where British surnames made little sense to the natives, nicknames combined identifiability of a utilitarian kind with rough poetry. Thus in Malaya the white men were generically *puteh* (white) or *lintah puteh* (white leeches), just as the Chinese were *kitam bersepit* (pincered crabs, the pincers being their chopsticks), and there had to be a further narrowing-down for individuals – *puteh gemok* (the fat one) and so on.

This scientific little book, which is full of sociometric maps and sociograms and other things I don't well understand, admits the general magic of naming. You hold a thing down, control it, by the mere act of applying a name to it. You fix the place of a person in a tight social order, such as a school, by giving him a nickname. Such a nickname need not be pejorative; it can be a mere neutral manipulation of a surname. Thus Hackett will rhyme itself into Brackett, Gardner become Weed, Sharples change to Bluntles, Newton be particularised into Isaac. This is internal motivation. External motivation produces names like Sewage (for the malodorous) and Brainbox or Computer (for the intelligent), but also the unexceptionable Snow, Rusty, Carrots and Copper-knob (Bluey is rightly termed 'that Australian curiosity').

It is better, it seems, to have even a derogatory nickname than no nickname at all. 'Depersonalisation through being nameless is a miserable state.' West Indian and Pakistani children in British schools are particularly sensitive about having to glide, unnamed ghosts, among the Barrels, Slobadobs, Jam Butties and Apemen. One dark-skinned girl was glad to be be named Snoteater – partially internally developed out of her given name Sonita but also cruelly external. Though onomatically abused, she was at least accepted as belonging to the social group, a group sustained through the ethnic tensions that would seem to divide it. A jeer of 'Chocolate drop' is countered by 'Get back in your ice-cream van'; the whole thing becomes ritualistic. Nevertheless, to be nickname-characterised in terms of the abstraction of race is a depersonalising cruelty far greater than being called Brain of Britain ("Cos he's a thick Mick really") or, because of your thin legs, Wednesday ('When's dey gonna break?').

The ingenuity by which nicknames are transformed, through a chain of phonic or associative wordplay, into what may be termed nicknicknames, seems to point to a creative impulse that transcends the crude desire to hurt. Jackie Amos, in a 12-to-14 school age-group, became Amosquito and then Flea. Judy Lancaster became Bomber

Peter Porter

The English Vice

I counted the bottles of wine
we might have drunk together
since she died. I remembered
the faded fresco of a bald saint
carrying his own flayed skin
over his arm. I bought free-range eggs
and ate veal only in Italy.
Like-minded people helped me
enjoy the sun's surreal art,
a balcony above eternity.
I tried to enter the century
of importance, to sight continents
where things are taken seriously
beyond the uninformative fact of death.

What is left to a failed obsessional
but the close-up art of turning
everything to pastoral?
The world goes backwards,
I am leaving my skeleton
to the Academy of Cows.

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and Jane Percy Persil Automatic. As with old Cockney rhyming-and back-slang, there seems to be an unconscious deference to the ultimate mystery of naming. All words in time become mysterious as they move from their simple descriptive origins, and the free fantasising of a name is a model of the larger linguistic process. I once heard a dog called Thrice And Once. Its true name was Haji, transmuted to Haj-dog and, when it whined for a walk, Hedge-pig. Had it lived long enough, it might have ended up as Macbeth. Mystery names usually yield to backward probing and disclose their origin. An assistant chaplain at a public school wondered at first why he was called Puppy. Then he discovered that his boss was called Dog because of his dog-collar.

Helen McNeil

Our Gang

Good As Gold by JOSEPH HELLER *Cape* £4.95

Bruce Gold, the Jewish intellectual hero of Joseph Heller's new novel, has a story about Henry Kissinger, the man whom Gold hates most in the world. America's first Jewish Secretary of State has travelled the world without finding a tailor who could make up a suit from a small piece of material that Kissinger carries with him. Finally, in Tel Aviv, a tailor not only makes him a suit, but has enough left over for a vest and another pair of pants. 'How did you do it?' asks the astonished diplomat. 'It was easy, Mr Kissinger,' replies the tailor. 'Here in Israël you are not such a big man'.

Good As Gold is about what happens to men like Gold and Kissinger who think they have grown too big for their ethnic identity. The possibilities for inauthenticity are almost endless and Heller chronicles most of them in marvellous comic exchanges that cry to be read aloud. 'I used to be Jewish, you know', confides dimwitted financier Harris Rosenblatt. 'I used to be a hunchback', snaps Gold after he has given up trying to kissingerise himself. *Good As Gold* is the act of a brilliant intellectual stand-up comic, though over the length of the book some of the routines start to flag. After the devastating stream of jabber in Heller's masterpiece *Something Happened* it was perhaps inevitable that the next book would seem a less consistent performance. Heller pays a certain price for aiming his surreal, jolting wit this time at characters who are all too easily locatable on the novelist's map of American social groups.

In New York, Bruce Gold's position is somewhere below and to the right of Irving Howe and Alfred Kazin. Gold has just got a fat advance for a book on the American Jewish experience, which turns out to be Heller's novel. Years before, Gold's friend Lieberman, the editor of a neo-conservative journal not a million miles from *Commentary*, had dined at the White House as a payoff for supporting the Vietnam war. Gold struck back with a snarling article called 'Invite a Jew to the White House (and You Make Him Your Slave)'. Poor Gold has had to wait a decade for his chance of enslavement, until a President appears who has spent his first year in the White House writing about his first year in the White House. Washington mouthpiece Ralph Newsome says the President loved Gold's 'fair' (i.e. judiciously grovelling) review. Gold is offered a big job as an 'unnamed source' or 'spokesman' – possibly even Secretary of State. First, however, Gold should get a tactical divorce:

> Well, Bruce, to put it plainly, I couldn't see much point in tying myself down to a middle-aged woman with four children, even though the woman was my wife and the children my own. Can you?

Quick as you can direct-dial, Gold selects a tall blonde for his replacement wife. Newsome approves in Washington Newspeak: 'All of us want you working with us as soon as possible after the people above us decide whether they want you working here at all.'

So far so good. For the first hundred pages or so, *Good As Gold* is the best American novel in years. Then Heller marks time for a couple of hundred pages until suddenly Gold is saved from himself. Pulling out his file of Kissinger atrocity clippings, Gold sails into an attack that carries him beyond mere American into Yiddish, a language whose rich store of invective gives strength to his loathing. This jumped-up Jewish cowboy who strides into town with a cocked nuke on each hip, who kneels and prays with that *shagetz* Nixon so he can kill more Asians with a clear conscience, this Kissinger is no *shayna Yid*, but a *putz*, a *schlemiehl*, a *grubba naar*, a *bonditt*, a *Chaim Yankel*, a *Koorveh*, *chozzer*, *momzer* – Gold falls silent, because mingled with his disgust for this soiler of the ethnic nest is a 'mysterious sympathy' for an intellectual mercenary so like himself in every way but one. Kissinger has succeeded where Gold has failed. He went to Washington, changed wives and developed a cold Yankee hypocrisy which enabled him to oversee the murder of thousands. Gold's splenetic father got it right when he howled at Kissinger's television image 'That ain't no Jew!' Rather, Kissinger is the monster that results when a Jew denies his Jewishness and, through it, his humanity. Gold goes back to his dumpy wife and reverses the right to hate others as he hates himself.

Heller has written *Good As Gold* after two hugely influential novels whose heroes were placeable only as American. *Catch-22* instilled a life-enhancing scepticism into the generation that was about to experience Vietnam. Even Heller couldn't stop General Westmoreland single-handed, but for the millions of readers of *Catch-22* Westmoreland had been pre-shrunk into a replica of Major Major with a less good gag writer. *Good As Gold* is a more local, more recognisable book; but that's not where its difficulties lie. I don't think American Jewish novelists are all basically writing the same novel, with only a certain amount of content to fight over. It doesn't matter if Saul Bellow and Norman Mailer got there first with the Washington appointment, if Bernard Malamud cornered the European past, if Philip Roth was getting into his fictive *shiksas* at an age when other nice Jewish boys were still dreaming of fountain pens.

What does matter is that Heller, having temporarily joined the ranks of socially identifiable novelists, can't seem to get beyond acting out the problem of to be, or not to be, Jewish. Though Gold's situation is real enough, his story is fake. The one-joke minor characters keep getting trotted out for undeserved encores. Gold's queasy self-love makes him a wonderful butt for Heller's ambivalent satire, but as a social index he wears thin. By having Gold attack Kissinger in the ethnically intimate medium of Yiddish, Heller ironically ends up domesticating the monster into an almost lovable rascal. Heller had Kissinger's number when he made him satirise himself. Try this insight on foreign policy: 'You cannot deal with it by a tough-guy or macho effusion, but only by having a steady policy that succeeds.' That was the real Kissinger in the *New York Times* last month. In America he still thinks he is a big man.

Last week, in reviewing *Fascists: A Social Psychological View of the National Front*, Martin Walker wrote about 'Jew-bashing in *Searchlight* as Tyndall rallies the old Nazi stalwarts.' This was an unfortunate and wholly inadvertent mistake, confusing *Spearhead*, which is a National Front paper edited by John Tyndall, with *Searchlight*, which is anti-Facist, and edited by Maurice Ludmer. We hope most readers will have perceived that Jew-bashing in *Searchlight* is as implausible as intellectual coherence in *Spearhead*.

Craig Raine

The Old Botanical Gardens

This delicate sapling
still wears a caliper,
and will never get well
or lose its impetigo now,

for the healers have gone
whose hands could cure
the tap with bronchitis
and make the weather fine.

Eglon, the King of Moab,
is dead in his hothouse,
a leaking bag of peat,
his fez on the floor:

the city of palm trees
he possessed has gone,
his summer parlour cold
as a broken iceberg . . .

The botanical gardens
are empty of everything
but grievances, like
an atheist's heaven.

Grave on bare grave
and a host of placards,
demanding the return
of flowers from exile:

strangers with Latin names
that are shy on the tongue.
They force us to falter,
like a lump in the throat,

though the gardens are gone
and all our futile grief
a scourge of dead ivy
on a cold stone wall.

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

John Mortimer

Valiant for Truth

I served my country in the last war in a comfortable and not particularly distinguished way as a script writer with a Government Documentary Film Unit. Although I now count this as one of the happiest periods of my life, I was learning my dramatic trade in a school of film-making which I now think to have been totally misguided, if not positively dangerous. It all came about when, home from school, I gave a performance of my Punch and Judy show to a Mr Beddington, who lived near my parents' house in the country. Jack Beddington later became something quite high up in the Ministry of Information, and when I was old enough to need a job which would save me from the two heroic extremes of pacifism and the RAF, my father's old neighbour turned up with an opening in the Crown Film Unit. I was taken on, it seems, for my skill as a puppeteer; as it turned out, this was not a bad qualification, because it was the way of the documentary movement to treat human beings almost entirely as puppets.

When I arrived at Pinewood Studios in 1942 to join 'Crown', I was given a job as a fourth assistant director. This grand-sounding title covered such duties as fetching the director's tea, parking the lady producer's car (a job I rarely managed without a certain amount of scrunching of bumpers) and calling 'Quiet please' at the start of each shot. I either did this in a low, apologetic voice, which had no effect whatever on the general hubbub, or in a kind of hysterical shriek which caused plugs to be pulled and a general walk-out by the labour force involved. When I lost 33 electricians in the course of a train journey to Liverpool it became clear that my days as an assistant director were numbered.

I had occasionally noticed Laurie Lee standing about in the corridors at Pinewood Studios: as often as not playing on some small wind instrument. I was told that he was the script writer; but although he had been enormously interested in the war in Spain, round whose dusty battlegrounds he had trudged with a violin and a notebook, the present conflict struck him as banal by comparison and a poor subject for scripts. He was off in search of more significant writing, and his departure left a yawning gap in the script department: so before I could cause more strikes or lose more electricians I found myself slotted into it. I had no real ambition to become a film director: the aching boredom of standing about on draughty sets while each take is endlessly frustrated by fluffed lines, running make-up or hairs on the camera's gate was not really for me (they say that anyone can direct a film who can stay awake); but I was determined to become a writer. I had a uniform with 'Crown Film Unit' emblazoned on the shoulder and £11 a week (quite enough for a small flat down the Kings Road and a visit to the movies three nights a week). I was a government-employed writer, something I hope never in my life to become again.

The Ministry of Information films were technically excellent, and often beautiful. Time and again silvery bombers rose into the sky performing a kind of aerial ballet to the stirring music of Dr Vaughan Williams. Great combine harvesters felled the wheat and the miners' hats were like glow worms before dawn in the streets of patriotic Welsh villages (was there a choir working up to the crescendo of Parry's 'Jerusalem' in the background?). Fishing boats, steelworks, aircraft factories were admirably photographed: but the films failed disastrously when it came to the people.

'People' in our films were confined to that wholly mythical figure 'The Man in the Street' – or the worker at the assembly bench, the landgirl in the turnip field, the pilot at the 'Roger and out' apparatus. People were invariably photographed looking gnarled and sitting on tractors, or enjoying a mug of tea before getting in the herring catch (or putting their rough, photogenic hands to the nets), or peering upwards from the Ack-Ack emplacement saying, 'Jerry's a bit naughty tonight' with a kind of gruff courage. In real life I noticed people spent a lot of time moving home to avoid their call-up papers, bargaining for black-market petrol, making cigarette lighters for sale at their benches in their aircraft factories, or merely going on living as though the war didn't exist at all. None of this, of course, got into the documentary films of the period.

Another reason for the extreme artificiality of our films was that it was part of the documentary credo never to use actors. 'The Man in the Street' had to be played by the actual man in the street, with results that varied from embarrassing timidity to outrageous over-playing. Documentary films never learned the first dramatic lesson, that naturalism is only possible by the use of extreme artifice.

These thoughts and recollections of my vanished past are brought about by my reading Forsyth Hardy's new edition of *Grierson on Documentary* (Faber £2.50). John Grierson was an ambitious and radical Scot, born in the 1890s, with more experience of film organisation than film-making. He became the St Paul of the documentary movement – the Christ figure being Robert Flaherty, whose *Nanook of the North* had done wonders for the average Eskimo in the igloo. Grierson set out the documentary tenets with religious zeal, and they were part of our creed in the Crown Film Unit. 'We believe', he wrote,

> that articles taken from the raw can be finer (more real in the philosophic sense) than the acted article ... Add to this that Documentary can achieve an intimacy of knowledge and effect impossible to the shim-sham mechanics of the studio and the lily-fingered interpretations of the metropolitan actor.

How wrong he was! In fact the truth told about wartime in England by documentary films was far less, and even less courageous, than the truth told about 1930s America by the box office movies which Grierson despised. And the reason is not far to seek: the documentaries were made with State money for reasons of propaganda, and therefore *could* not tell the truth. It was not only that we pretended that the RAF actually found and bombed their purely military targets when they set out to the music of Vaughan Williams; we falsified the whole feeling of a great period of history.

The odd thing is that Grierson, apparently so valiant for truth, was a warm advocate of propaganda; his only regret about it being that ours was much less effective than the German variety. Worse still, he didn't regard propaganda in art as an unpleasant wartime expedient: it would continue not merely while 'the war was to be won', he wrote, but 'because as far as the eye can see we are entering an era of action in which only the givers of orders and the doers generally will be permitted to survive ...' He also suggested that 'in times of great change the only songs worth writing are marching songs'.

I always realised there was something deeply wrong with the documentary film world, but I hadn't thought that it was as bad as that. Is that really what I was doing, giving a couple of lines to a nervous ATS at the gunsight? 'Two lumps is it, Dorothy?' 'Ta everso.' Is that what I was up to when I wrote a minor epic on the train builders in Darlington? Was I preparing for a world in which 'only the givers of orders and the doers will be permitted to survive'? If so, I am profoundly grateful that we failed; and more than ever grateful to be writing for commercial television. At least no one tells you to stick to marching songs, and there is a slender chance that, with a little bit of luck and some good actors, you may even be able to tell the truth.

Films – 2

John Coleman

Triple Bill

Movie Movie (A) *Classic, Haymarket*
The Hardcore Life (X) *Warner 2*
Kentucky Fried Movie (X) *Classics, Haymarket and Oxford Street; Screen on the Green*

The man has a carved face, it is effectively unconventional, it bothers and convinces. George C. Scott has – in his time – played many parts. It is the luck of the film draw that this big-nosed, heavy-boned person should be playing something like three of them on London screens this week. On the whole, good luck. Stanley Donen's affectionate, parodic *Movie Movie*, taking off from a nostalgic backlash on foresight surely inspired by a lot of decent and rubbish stuff being resurrected on the telly, is exactly what it claims to be – movie, movie: a double-bill. The first of the two fake-1933 events is called *Dynamite Hands*, is in black-and white, and is predictably about a pugilist, a Hungarian lad, one

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Joey Popchik. He doesn't throw the fight, although invited to do so in style immemorial. This is quite funny. Funnier is the one in colour: *Baxter's Beauties of 1933*, where the very fine Mr Scott (a tired trainer in the fisticuff outing) is a showbiz impresario, dying. If that sounds unhumorous, let me assure you it isn't. The two pieces have been written with a diabolically good ear to the oldies by Larry Gelbart and Sheldon Keller. I had a notebook of quotes – but why spoil your fun?

Almost intolerable is a morally hybrid affair called *The Hardcore Life* and directed, as well as written, by Paul Schrader, every which way. This purports, at a guess, to be a stern look at the very worst uses to which sex gets put. Gaudy it is, and colour-filtered, and really ill-mannered: it's a porn-film about porn-films. George C. Scott eerily and painfully lends his presence to it, seeking a lost daughter who has figured in a sex-movie. He alone imports a shadow of conviction: one trusts he was well paid for his effort in an ugly exercise. Parody, incidentally, seems to be a large element in this week, along with Scott. How else to account for the quite dire and sloppy lines on which this pretend-exposé concludes? We will not cite these, either.

Kentucky Fried Movie, made beforehand by the fellow, John Landis, who turned out the successfully kinky *National Lampoon's Animal House*, is a whole series of gags at the expense of TV commercials and kung-fu and all the dreck that we are diurnally exposed to, for better or worse. It is often enough exceedingly amusing, vastly vulgar, comical even if its targets are as huge as houses. It is, as some of you out there may be aware, a bit of a bonus to get a laugh these wet spring days.

Television

Julian Barnes

Caterwaul

> Nowadays my cat Hastings sits about a good deal sleeping, musing and eating, and the farthest she ventures is the garden. She is 13 and blind in one eye. Ah, but she could tell tales of her youth. She was off at dusk, tail up, ears a-twitch, only returning, in town or country, with the dawn. I used to speculate about her other life . . .

The author of this soppy guff is not, as you might suspect, a damp-eyed pensioner with no formal education, or even Beverley Nichols, but 'a novelist, literary critic and playwright' – the author of this week's *Radio Times* 'Preview' column, Susan Hill. Now, I am almost as sorry as the next man that poor old Hastings has lost the use of one peeper (though it does, come to think of it, make his name even more appropriate); but I am not at all sorry that the damaging text of the novelist, literary critic and playwright – might she turn out to be the feline J. R. Ackerley? – has been exposed to scrutiny. Cats provoke more soft-headed discarding of the faculty of rational observation than any other domestic animal; even their driven night-time prowls are twisted by their bedbound owners into a surrogate emblem of liberated sexuality. Anyone naturally resistant to the mushy anthropomorphism of novelists, literary critics and playwrights can root out in a moment the plain facts about cats: that they are entirely selfish, laughingly exploitative of their owners, and vicious to furniture. They also have extremely bad breath. This probably isn't their fault, but that of their doting owners, for buying them tins of food whose main ingredient is kangaroo meat (and if you think that friend of yours has bad breath, then try to give a wide berth to a feline roo belch). The only interesting thing about cats is that they can be dropped from a great height and still land on their feet; the concomitantly boring thing about their owners is that they get shirty when scientifically-minded friends seek to demonstrate this principle of natural history.

The most gratifying aspect of Peter Crawford's study of four farm cats in *The World About Us* (BBC-2) was that it demonstrated how sentimental anthropomorphism is just as rife among academic zoologists as among pet-owners: confirming that the higher balls is just as silly as the lower balls. Did you know, for example, that cats go in for 'interactions' – as in the phrase 'grooming and other interactions' – and that they're pretty keen on 'bonding' (there was, indeed, one clip of bonding which the NVLA might have approved: moggies on the job, I can assure you, is not a sight calculated to launch beardless youngsters into carnality).

But perhaps the verbiage was really meant to protect the researchers from themselves, from the hurtful discovery that their year-long study was a complete waste of time (though not, to put the matter in perspective, as complete as that of the girl postgraduate mentioned in the programme who has spent three years observing the cats which live out of skips in Portsmouth dockyard). The *WAU* team fitted out their four cats with collar bugs normally used for tracking giraffes in Africa; they followed them at night with infra-red sights; and, most comically of all, they recorded interactions on an 'event recorder' (each button on the machine's console produced a musical note, which was recorded and fed into a computer: so 'cat groomed, pissed, and climbed tree' was translated into *pong, plop, glub* – which doubtless sounded a lot more scientific than simply writing down what the animal did). And by the end of the year the event recorders – human and mechanical – had worked out that cats hunt, breed, lie about the place, go for walks, and occasionally get ill and die. The lyrical photography of felines scoffing voles, rats, mice, pigeons and rabbits was the work of (who else?) one Maurice Tibbles.

The Other Side (BBC-2), a series of plays produced by the sacked Stephen Gilbert, which was to have included Ian McEwan's *Solid Geometry* until the latest attack of Milne feet, opened with Derrick Buttress's gentle, simple, worthwhile *Connie*. It tracked round the beached life of a spinster somewhere in her thirties who, we gradually realise, is not after all going to fall for cheerful, fairly nice shop steward Frank – or, for that matter, any other man: she's much more touched by the fate of her bitter, croaky, pregnant workmate Gina (Janine Duvitski). As the light gently dawned, one imagined the prim, skirt-tugging NVLA response. So: 'a play about being lesbian'? No, rather a play about *not* being lesbian, about not having the chance to let natural feelings flow, about sticking out – pained and puzzled – against being what you know you're not, without having quite the bottle to stick out for what you might be.

The writing was unexceptional – with plays on subjects like this you find yourself awarding marks for the simple avoiding of the obvious, the mawkish, the melodramatic, and the just-like-us conclusion (and they get a long way on such negative praise); but *Connie* did enshrine a marvellous performance by Marjorie Yates. She owns a bruised, wise face (cast in the mould of Glenda Jackson's), and she played Connie with a wry impassiveness, lit up by a rare, breaking smile. 'Y'ought to come out with me one evening and see the other side', cheeked Frank; 'One side's enough', she replied, and her flat, sharp, sweet-and-sour delivery of this ordinary line seemed to contain her whole parched life.

Theatre

Benedict Nightingale

All Bull

The Merchant of Venice *Warehouse*
Psy-Warriors *Theatre Upstairs*
The Tax Exile *Bush*
P.S., Your Cat Is Dead *Open Space*

There are, or were, two main varieties o *Merchant*: the tale of a fanged and ferociou Semite muzzled by the agility of Portia Nerissa, et al; and the tale of a dignifiec Rothschild baited past decency and endurance by Christian curs. Macklin set the first tradition in motion back in 1753: Olivier, in 1971 best represents the style that continues slowly to replace it. John Barton avoids both sorts o sentimentality by the simple expedient o treating his combatants with equal scepticism The Christians are, on the whole, a spoiled boorish bunch, much given to throwing bread-rolls, shooting off cap-pistols, and othei types of horseplay; and the shock provoked by their deep, instinctive prejudice is the shock o recognition, because they wear the suits some of our generation's grandfathers wore at public school or Oxbridge. The upper-crust yob Gratiano, whose pet idiocy is dog-imitations, represents this faction at its most gruesome. And yet behind the witty, teasing front displayed by Patrick Stewart's Shylock, there festers a no less nasty temperament. The droopy, do-it-yourself fags he stingily smokes are a tiny symptom. The contemptuous slap he gives a hunched, browbeaten Jessica is a more substantial one. Here's a sour, loveless man, corroded by avarice, mutilated by money. Even his friend Tubal finds him faintly appalling.

Mr Stewart is no simple villain. Witness his discomforting blend of fury and laughter, the half-hilarious disbelief and outrage of his 'Hath not a Jew eyes?', and, especially, his handling of humiliation. Realising that the Christians have found a loophole in the law, and will win as they always do, he nods and smiles in cynical admiration. Threatened with penury, he loses all self-respect, grovels before the Duke, bobs and bows to Antonio. So some German Jews of our own era must have degraded, ridiculed and ingratiated themselves in hopes of avoiding the gas chambers. By the time Mr Stewart has bumbled

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offstage chuckling to himself, a dazed, cracked, broken figure, he has done as much to illumine the causes and consequences of racial bigotry as any Shylock I can recall: proof in itself of the intelligence and balance of a production only one of whose other excellences I have space to celebrate. Lisa Harrow is the first Portia I've seen who is actually breathless with fear that someone other than Bassanio may plump for the correct casket and oblige her to marry him. In fact, she looks as if she might throw up. Isn't this a blow for truth?

Last week brought us a revival of Howard Brenton's *Churchill Play*, the first big bang in the now-fashionable Theatre of Cataclysm, and this week we have part of the radioactive fall-out, an exercise in paranoia by David Leland. *Psy-Warriors*, as it's called, comes with built-in protection against the reviewer: a twist of plot which it would be unjust to reveal and therefore a considerable amount of play which it is impossible to analyse. Enough to say that you must believe not only that our military is capable of treating suspected terrorists like lab-rats (a relatively easy leap of faith nowadays); you must also ask yourselves if somewhere in the catacombs of power a government unit isn't training agents provocateurs, contemplating atrocities it will then attribute to the IRA, and sending out killer quads to hone their skills on innocent Arabs. Mr Leland's writing is dogged, earnest, and not without tension; but it hasn't quite the quality to suspend scepticism, complacency, or whatever concatenation of disbelief most people will have carried with them into the Theatre Upstairs.

The play's time-span is supposed to be late April and early May 1979; and Jonathan Gems's *Tax Exile*, too, has some bearing on this week's election and the campaign that has preceded it. By standards of the fringe it is something of a freak, a play whose heartbeat sounds as if it's coming from the Right, not the Left. The protagonist is an inventer in hiding from a Revenue anxious to penalise him for his enterprise. His living-room – emblem, it might be claimed, of Britain itself – is invaded by his punk daughter and layabout son, and slowly stripped bare by his wife, a newly-wakened feminist gone to earth in some nearby covert or coven. To inveigh against the play's political resonances would be heavy and humourless, because its pretensions aren't great. What worries me more is its easy if engaging caricature, its fondness for targets that are all bull and so more or less unmissable. There are some nice performances, notably June Page's blue-thatched bovver-girl and Richard Kane's amiably wilting taxvader, and one likeable exchange. 'What do you think of the Indianapolis 500?' 'They're all innocent.'

For all I know, James Kirkland is an ex-marine jock given to slaying dragons and initiating the maidens he's rescued into the rites of straight-A sex: so I hope he won't take it personally if I say that his *P.S.* leaves the impression of an extended homosexual fantasy, complete with sado-masochistic episodes and a mawkish end. Jimmy (Christopher Gable) flings out his unappetising girl-friend Marilyn Galsworthy), and proceeds to attack the young burglar (Christopher Muncke) he's found skulking beneath the bed. He ties him down, bares his bum by ripping off his togs, feeds him cat-food; and then, when the ritual humiliation is over, chummily joins him in making a fool of his ex-mistress, who has looked in with a new lover. The two men are left bedding down, this time separately, in what will evidently become their joint nest: a denouement that owes less to life than to the kind of fairy tale, if such there be, in which the princess turns into a frog and the handsome prince ends up pledging his troth to the local ogre.

Music

Andrew Clements

Ever Higher

BBC Symphony Orchestra *Festival Hall*

Of all the early 'romantic' composers, Schumann suggests the most intriguing artistic personality. No other comes so close to bridging the historical gap between literary and musical romanticism, demonstrating the clear interactions between the two art forms in the early years of the 19th century. His music draws as much strength from its literary inspirations and aspirations as it does from its musical predecessors; in the greatest works – the early sets of piano miniatures, the song-cycles – the correlation between music and image is direct and precise. The novels of Jean Paul, the phantasmagorical world of E. T. A. Hoffmann, the poetry of Kerner, Eichendorff and Heine preoccupied Schumann from adolescence: from such a close involvement in the literary world it was a straightforward progression to constructing a personal fantasy world which interlaced private and literary mythologies. This Davidsbund brought a peculiar charge to Schumann's early works; as the potency of the mixture faded so his music sought more direct, pre-packed literary inspirations.

Not surprisingly then, Goethe's *Faust* came to obsess Schumann as it obsessed so many composers of the first half of the 19th century. Quotations from *Faust* crop up in the manuscripts of early piano works, and by the late 1830s he was toying with the idea of turning it into an opera. But in the event it was the essentially non-operatic final part which triggered his *Scenes from Faust* in 1844; the first two parts were added in 1848-49 and the overture written in 1853. It turned out a curiously hybrid work. The third part, a word-for-word setting of Goethe's final scene (later to inspire Mahler in the finale of his Eighth Symphony), is pure oratorio, a patchwork of many-layered solo vocal lines and full-blooded choral writing, which climaxes in an extended setting of Goethe's closing words 'The eternal Feminine leads us ever higher'. For Schumann, so attuned to the relationship between art and autobiography, the eternal Feminine can hardly not have become identified with his wife Clara. The first two parts, however, corresponding to the first two parts of Goethe, hover unconvincingly between frankly operatic writing and a secular cantata. Part Two in particular follows a convincing dramatic curve, from Ariel's attempt to revive Faust's creativity, through his encounters with Want, Need, Care and Debt and subsequent blinding, to his death. It provides the most compelling listening in the evening-long work.

Seven years ago Benjamin Britten revived *Scenes from Faust* at the Aldeburgh Festival, subsequently recording the work for Decca. Britten, the peerless accompanist in Schumann's songs, proved a powerful advocate also for his uneven dramatic flow, thinning down some of the thickest orchestral textures to provide light and shade, encouraging his top-flight soloists to the sharpest characterisation. Michael Gielen's Festival Hall performance with the BBCSO was faithful enough to the letter of the score yet lacked the essential gift of recreation that perhaps only a great creative artist could bring.

Taken in isolation, the BBCSO's last two South Bank concerts almost suggest a revival in the orchestra's fortunes. A week after the Schumann rarity, Pierre Boulez gave his only London concert with the orchestra this season, a programme miraculously recalling his vintage days with them in the late Sixties. He gave a rarely performed Berlioz tryptych, a Debussy orchestral song and the large-scale *Le Martyre de Saint-Sebastien*, in a version with a portion of D'Annunzio's linking narration retained but including all of Debussy's marvellous music. Boulez managed to move the normally recalcitrant orchestra to heights of refinement and articulation one thought they had had entirely forsaken. Memories of the Elliott Carter débâcle of six weeks ago were at least partly effaced.

Sport

Russell Davies

Boots Boots

The book that revived all the hoo-ha over rugby shamateurism is published this weekend. John Peter Rhys Williams wrote *JPR* (Collins £5.95) himself, which will give him whatever satisfaction is to be had from the event. It is an amiable muddle of an autobiography, perplexing as to sequence – which tour came after what exam, or before which baby or change of address – but happily sparing in its distribution of those parish-magazine-style nervous exclamations which make even ghosted memoirs so frequently embarrassing. (Perhaps the exclamation mark should be banned from sporting reminiscences altogether. How may times has one squirmed, instead of jiggling up and down with the hoped-for glee, to see a paragraph end with some variation on 'That certainly made my day, as you can imagine!' Dozens of times, I'll wager! *Ugh*.)

JPR's physical image in its latter-day form has become so firmly imprinted on the public mind that it is a small nostalgic shock to take in the fine cover photograph on his book, where he appears with hair banded in the Red Indian style and socks rolled right up to the bandaged knees. There is a harmonious athleticism about his slanting run. In later years, the socks came down and the nappy-like hitch of the shorts up the side gave JPR the look of a truculent baby. The whole emphasis of his deportment, particularly during his trundling runs back into position after some catastrophic tackle, had changed from

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purposefulness to defiance: bravado, indeed. I was one of the ones who thought that, in the last two or three years, the player was making a fetish of his fearlessness: the showpiece of his game had become the reckless plunge into boot-infested depths where no referee could see and the whistle, in any case, comes too late. Of course, nobody would wish to stifle any sportsman's natural courage; and there were plenty of occasions when the dangerous was also the necessary thing to do. But it was my feeling that JPR had begun to fear that unless he was seen to be risking his neck he would be living up neither to his personal reputation nor even to the expectations of a Welsh crowd as to the appropriate behaviour of a full-back. The press did not help by seemingly encouraging him to measure his performance in stitches. No wonder the touring All Blacks made him, in every cruel sense, a marked man.

Since Williams is disinclined to rummage too deeply among his own motives, we are free to guess that one of the non-public impulses behind his self-destructive policy may be the feeling that he has had too comfortable a life. Certainly it has been as smooth up to this point as most of us could hope for, its only real setback being the symbolic defeats at sport. Williams lives in a dynasty of doctors: both parents, his wife, his brothers, all are medical people, and so is he. It must have been touch and go whether the family dog became a vet. In the Welsh class structure, doctors inhabit a moral aristocracy all their own, so Williams naturally followed a path of modest privilege: a year at prep school before Bridgend Grammar – where one of the teachers, for a year, was the new Olympic long jump champion Lynn Davies – followed by a year on a sports scholarship to Millfield School, where Gareth Edwards had been a couple of years before. (The coal-tips and valley-boys rhetoric can be overdone.)

Williams went on to win Junior Wimbledon in 1966. That does not necessarily mean great things in terms of ultimate potential; but the kind of results he was getting – transatlantic wins, for example, over Dick Stockton and Alex 'Sandy' Meyer – do suggest that Williams could have built himself into a Davis Cup player and big earner. If his ambition ever was to make a fortune, he clearly made the wrong choice in the late Sixties.

As for rugby, somehow the chapters on this subject, even the ones offering practical hints, do not bring the game fully alive. This is no new or surprising fault in a rugby book. As so often, one sometimes gets a lively sense of the shape of a tour, with its slumps and crests of morale, and even a little of the dynamics of the occasional game; but the way in which good play is instinctively put together, and the elation that results, somehow always elude even the best analysts. Rugby players are also commonly less than frank about occurrences off the field – some of which, in fairness, they can hardly be expected to remember.

As a 'hard' man of the game, Williams is forced half into the open on the matter of foul play, but here his performance is not all one could have hoped. Referees in various parts of the world are complained of, no doubt with justice ('*our* put in, not yours', one Australian is alleged to have adjudicated); but JPR's own misdemeanours tend to be of the 'unfortunate incident' type, while the opposition's come across as systematically bullying. Not that Williams is unaware that he himself could be considered the bullying type. A photo of his famous tackle-into-touch on Jean-Pierre Gourdon, just short of the Welsh line, is anxiously captioned 'a perfectly legitimate forearm to the Frenchman's body' – I wondered about that at the time. Incidentally, JPR claims that there is no such thing as a 'professional foul' in rugby. However, the sentence in question continues 'but there are very few players who do not realise that whilst defending, a stoppage of play can result in three points whereas an uninterrupted run to the line can result in six.' There speaks a man who in the nicest possible way, has habitually had his cake and habitually eaten it too. For which task, staggeringly, he still retains all his own teeth.

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DINERS CLUB VISA

Art

John Spurling

Mean Lines

Jackson Pollock *Museum of Modern Art Oxford, until 13 May*
Miró *Hayward, until 13 May*

Raymond Chandler's Marlowe handles cases rather differently from his European counterparts: instead of standing at a distance and gradually assembling the elements into a coherent picture, he plunges in head first and emerges at last, physically battered, with the picture that was all the time concealed within the confusion. The difference between Jackson Pollock (born McCoy, of mainly Irish extraction, in Wyoming) and the European tradition of painting is essentially the same. If he remains, 23 years after his death in a car crash at the age of 44, the most difficult and uncomfortable of all the great painters of this century, it is no doubt partly because, in spite of everything, we still look at pictures in the light of that tradition. Pollock himself was influenced by it, but the very fact that he drew on paper and put paint on canvas and hung the results on walls is misleading. These are not completed, objectively composed 'cases', but the tracks of the violently involved investigator through the labyrinth. They happen to be recorded in a more or less permanent form, but it is better to think of them as ephemeral, as sand-paintings like those of the Navaho Indians which Pollock so much admired.

'When I'm *in* my painting,' he said, 'I'm not aware of what I'm doing. It is only after a sort of "get acquainted" period that I see what I have been about.' The process he describes, the subjective losing of oneself in the material as one works on it, is probably common to most artists when the work is going well. The fact that Pollock notoriously laid his canvases on the floor and attacked them from above with drips and spatters only suggests that he had a greater need than most artists to dominate as well as to enter his field of operations. The difference is not in the process itself but in the emphasis on the process. All painting is action painting, if one is discussing its execution, but Pollock's paintings are the action of painting made manifest.

Hence the importance of line. There can be no sense of action without a sense of time. Yet

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the time taken to make it is usually the least obvious thing about a painting, whose juxtapositions of form and colour are all (once settled by the artist) contemporaneous in the eyes of the viewer. Pollock's complicated agglomerations of line cannot be registered instantaneously as a general image; they have to be explored part by part like crowd scenes, Chinese landscape scrolls or – to give the appropriate abstract connection – pieces of music. Approached in this way, as time- rather than space-paintings, they begin to make sense. One observes their modulations, their passages of loud and soft, their patterns of repetition and variation; above all, one discovers that what look like aggressively defensive entanglements are in reality unfoldings, unwindings. It is as if the unopened pots of paint contained the clotted, pent-up feelings of the artist which are here released, dispersed, allowed to flow and interweave in dance-like rituals.

There are only two Pollocks in the Tate – the smaller is in the exhibition at Oxford – so that there is not much opportunity in this country for anyone to 'get acquainted' with Pollock's work. This exhibition of drawings and small paintings is the first here for 18 years and will be travelling round Europe as soon as it leaves Oxford. It provides a vivid demonstration of how original Pollock was, how little he owed to tradition. Certainly there are echoes of Picasso, Miró and the Surrealists' 'automatic' drawings in some of Pollock's earliest motifs; but none of the Europeans has his sense of frenzied density. As more and more elements rush in to fill the picture's space, one is aware of them less as floating than as forming an animated frieze, an excited mob processing or just milling about.

In the apocalyptic, fiercely coloured drawing *War*, done in 1945, the large, awkward figures of a man and a cow appear to have been flung over the top of the spiky, untidy pyre which occupies the centre of the picture, while a figure of death in the form of a crucifix (a reminiscence of Mexican popular religious art) makes a vertical on the right. In the later work the pyre has expanded to fill the whole space and in doing so has gained a grace and ease of movement, a calligraphic authority only occasionally discernible in the compressed contortions of the early work. The figures have disappeared almost completely, but their ritualistic gatherings, their windblown, archetypal ceremonies are carried into the artist's own psychological ceremonies with paint. Picasso and others re-used the primitive, but Pollock re-inhabited it.

After Pollock, Miró looks even more lightweight than usual. The exhibition of his drawings at the Hayward unfortunately contains a preponderance of more recent work, which is really nursery stuff. Nevertheless, in his day, which is to say mostly between the wars, Miró has been an artist to reckon with and this less for individual paintings (though there have been some splendid ones) than for the very facility which has undone him since. Miró never went deep – his dreams and symbols were always more farcical than tragic – but amongst all the agonising and struggling, the Whither Art? and the What Price Life? of the first half of the century, he offered a sense of freedom both from tradition and the reaction to tradition. 'Paint, invent, enjoy yourself' seems to be his message. The chief interest of this show is its earliest section in which one can see the heavy, laboured, academic drawings he started with over against the twinkling, elastic doodles into which he escaped. 999 symbolic Women, Birds, Stars and Moons later, one starts to hunger for Life and Art again, but so one does after any holiday. Miró is, I suppose, that: the Costa Brava of 20th century art.

Weekend Competition

No 2564 **Set by E. O. Parrott**

Mrs Worthington was advised not to put her daughter on the stage; some of us used to sing 'Don't go down the mine, Daddy'. Competitors are asked for admonitory verses begging listeners not to go into the BBC, the Gas Board, British Rail, British Steel, *The Times*, Ford's, or any other large and famous organisation. By 18 May; 16 lines max.

Result of No 2561 **Set by Dan Drough**

We asked for Daisychain poems about the election.

Report **by Jerry Attrick**

A real stinker, this one. Using the same letter to end one word and start the next doesn't sound like too hobbling a formal requirement, and many of you sailed into the comp planning long, confident, Kiplingesque lines. No way. Most of the sage pros wisely stuck to the short stretch, which (more or less) allowed you to hang on to sense and grammar. A lot of hard work went in to this one, so we'll pay you eight quid each; plus Rooms to Laurence Fowler and James Michie.

The envious Seventies slip past.
Thoughtless selection now will last
To Orwell's sombre Eighties; so,
Obey your reason, nerveless show
Which hypocritic candidate
Evades sound dealing, good debate.
Elicit truths, scorn Newspeak; know
What treacherous seeds shrewd despots sow.

LAURENCE FOWLER

We English hate electing governments.
Such hullabaloo of futile eloquence –
Everybody yelling gobbledygook, know-alls
(So often nescient) thundering glib balls!
Shall Labour regain Nottingham? Must Tring
(Gallup prognosticated doubtless) 'swing'?
Gamesmanship, propaganda and deceit:
Truly Yeats said, 'Do opposites seldom meet?'

JAMES MICHIE

Blessed Democracy, your rule
Encourages supporters' steps:
See eager, realistic, cool
Lemmings select their reps . . .
'Strong government!' they yelp. Proclaim
Maternal lashings strictly yours,
Slim Margaret Thatcher! Rigid dame,
Extirpate England's scabrous sores!

MARY HOLTBY

Callaghan now with heavy-tap patpaw waits,
Steamed-up pussycat's spectacles shimmering grim:
'Margaret Thatcher, reply! you've evaded
debates!'
Says satrap-rat-trap-jaw-jaw-jimmijaw-Jim.

Margaret Thatcher rejects such hustings spur,
Rhetoric, cheap pop peepshow, watershed dim:
Man! now walkabout, tout, to overmatch *her* –
Rest, trig girl! let Tele-V-view watch *him* –
mafficking gusto outdoor roar
rat-a-tat track-a-rat-back-to-the-paw
war-war-jimmijaw-Jim.

GINA BERKELEY

Tony Miles

Chess

No 131 **Munich International Tournament**

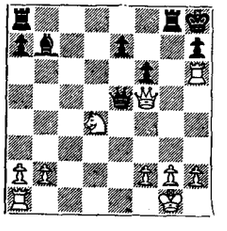
Karpov's first appearance since his successful title defence turned out to be short-lived. He took part in the Munich International tournament in February but after only five rounds was forced to withdraw and return home owning to the illness and subsequent death of his father. Up to that time he had not played very convincingly, winning just two games, one against the German tail-ender Dankert, the other from his compatriot Balashov, but was nonetheless sharing the lead with Spassky.

Thereafter Spassky seemed to be running away with the tournament, until he made an astonishing blunder against Dankert. After the moves (Spassky Black) **1.P-K4, P-K4; 2.N-QB3, N-KB3; 3.B-B4, N-B3; 4.P-Q3, B-B4; 5.P-B4. P-Q3; 6.N-R4, BxN; 7.RxB, N-KN5; 8.P-KN3, PxP; 9.BxP,** instead of the obvious and good 9 . . .N(N5)-K4 he produced the incredible **9 . . .NxP???** dropping a piece and the game to **10.Q-R5.** This result left the tournament wide open and the lead changed hands several times before settling in the hands of the German Guf Hübner. He increased it to a whole point and thus only needed a draw from his last game for the first place. However, he had Black against Spassky, and he too chose the wrong moment to produce his worst game. In consequence four players tied; Spassky, Hübner, Balashov and Andersson, each scoring 8½/13.

Michael Stean had the distinction of going through the tournament undefeated, but unfortunately won only one game and so missed the top prizes.

White: B. Spassky **Black: G. Sigurjinsson**

1.P-Q4, N-KB3; 2.P-QB4, P-K3; 3.N-KB3, P-QN3; 4.P-K3, (4.B-B4!) **B-N2; 5.B-Q3; B-K2; 6.0-0, 0-0; 7.P-QN3, P-Q4; 8.B-N2, QN-Q2; 9.N-B3, P-B4; 10.Q-K2, BPxP?!** Probably it is better to delay this exchange. Now White has a workable space advantage. **11.KPxP, R-K1; 12.QR-Q1, B-KB1; 13.N-K5, P-N3; 14.P-B4, R-B1; 15.R-B2, N-N1; 16.Q-K3, N-B3; 17.B-K2, B-N5?!** Better . . .B-N2. **18.B-B3, N-QR4?!** The continuation of a faulty plan. Black achieves his positional aim of forcing PxP, but only at the excessive price of leaving his remaining minor pieces offside. **19.PxP, NxQP; 20.NxN, BxN; 21.BxB, QxB; 22.N-N4!** Switching to a direct attack against Black's weakened kingside. **22. . . .B-K2; 23.B-R3!** The 'bad' bishop leaps out. **23. . . .Q-R4** Or . . .B-Q1; 24.P-B5! NPxP; 25.RxP! wins. **24.P-R3, B-R5; 25.R-K2,** Intending P-Q5 and B-N2. **25. . . .P-B4; 26.N-K5.** Black has staved off the immediate disaster, but with his pieces completely scattered, he is hopelessly lost! He next hopes for some relief from exchanges, but only rebounds in the loss of the QB file. **26 . . .R-B6; 27.QxR, QxR; 28.R-QB1** Intending Q-B7 winning. **28 . . .R-Q1; 29.Q-B7, Q-B7ch; 30.K-R1, QxBP; 31.Q-B7ch, K-R1; 32.N-B3,** Resigns (There is no defence to R-B7.)



Problem 131

Black to play. How should the game go? Answers to me at the NEW STATESMAN postmarked not later than 16 May.

Solution to Problem 129

1. . . .BxPch! 2.KxB, Q-N3ch; 3.K-R3, (K-R1, Q-B3ch mates or K-B1, Q-N8 mate) R-Q8! Resigns. If 4.QxR, Q-N5mate, or 4.Q-B3, Q-R3ch and R-N8 mate.

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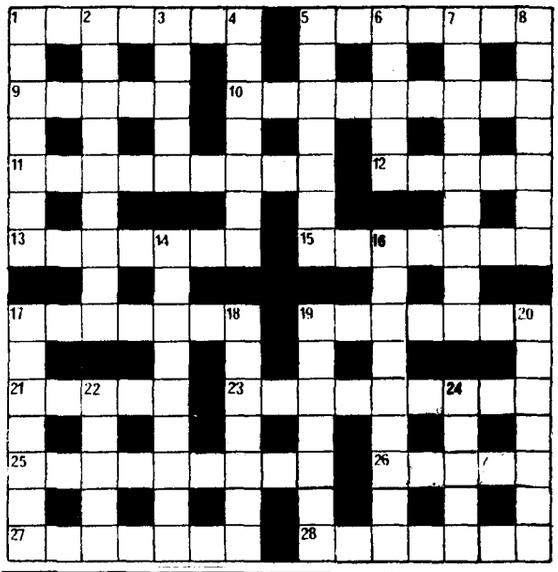
Weekend Crossword 1301

PRIZES: Book tokens of £2 for the first three correct solutions opened. Entries to Crossword 1301, New Statesman, Great Turnstile, London WC1V 7HJ, by first post 15 May.



ACROSS

1 'My heart is like a rainbow shell that —— in a halycon sea' (C. G. Rossetti) (7).
5 Being stoned, became dispirited (7).
9 It is part of a dog's make-up to suffer (5).
10 Animal which discovers gold goblet in tree (9).
11 A beautiful place and a call for moderation (9).
12 In general everyone goes back with us (5).
13 Common dish providing strange morsel (7).
15 Where to get a place to live in a few hours (7).
17 Distinctions appear negative in time (7).
19 Evergreen in the bar but usually sober (7).
21 Appropriate place when it is hot in French town (5).
23 A girl struck but not put out of countenance (9).
25 Organ observed and singled out (9).
26 One from here would make South Africa grumble (5).
27 Dolly is broken although not disintegrating (7).
28 Remedy for no play (7).

DOWN

1 One trip taken by dog (7).
2 Italian masterpiece which could make Rome dance (9).
3 'I am ——, I contain multitudes' (Whitman) (5).
4 Specious reasoner who makes a concession over the abridgement of history (7).
5 Tried to find food for the elderly (7).
6 Drink in like flowers (5).
7 Bird having sense of responsibility about most of the fruit (9).
8 Unusually arid yet providing food (7).
14 Street of the loud and brave (9).
16 Scholars bar thesis when it is rewritten (9).
17 When there is a cause of fighting in high school, they hold the coats (7).
18 Candidate with means of getting in for poor district (7).
19 If a boy disappeared, the lamp holder would make a noise (7).
20 Married woman got up without thought for weapon (7).
22 In bare surroundings this is a gondolier's song (5).
24 Returner who sang of wanderings? (5).

SETSQUARE

Solution to No 1300

Prizewinners to No 1300

John E. Brown (London SE11)
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45th Norfolk and Norwich Triennial Festival of Music and the Arts
Artistic Director: Norman Del Mar
Friday, 12th to Sunday, 21st October, 1979
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Cinema

SCREEN ON THE HILL, 435 3366 (Opp. Belsize Park Tube). 'Madame Rosa' (AA). Prog. 2.45, 4.45, 7.00, 9.15.

Exhibition

GANYMED GALLERY, 11 Gt Turnstile, WC1. 405 9836. Original lithographs and etchings by Moore, Arthur Boyd, Whiteley, Lowry, also 18 & 19 C satirical prints.

Meetings

ROY HATTERSLEY will give the Fabian Blanche Colebrook memorial lecture at 7.45 p.m. on Friday 18 May at the Lecture Theatre, Brighton Technical College, Pelham Street, Brighton. All welcome. Tickets from George Forbes, 66 Meadow Lane, Burgess Hill, Sussex. S.a.e. please.

BIRMINGHAM UNIVERSITY Caudwell Society Conference on Higher Education and the Labour Movement, 12 May. Details: Richard Shackleton, School of History, Birmingham University, Birmingham 15.

The Arts and the European Community
11-13 May 1979
Robert Gregoire (EEC), Gerald Bolea (Unesco), Lord Vaizey, Dr Adolf Dietz, Huw Wheldon, Maureen Duffy.
Details/application forms: Jan Russell, ICA, Nash House, The Mall, SW1.

'THE U.N.: LEAST EFFECTIVE HUMAN Rights System?', Leah Levin. Camden Council for International Cooperation. Wed. 9 May 6 p.m. at Polytechnic of North London, Prince of Wales Road, NW5.

CHINA: The Cultural Revolution in Retrospect. Films, talks, discussions, day school. Sat. 5 May 10-4.0. Mary Ward Centre, 9 Tavistock Place, WC1. 01-387 1616.

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON: The Joh Coffin Memorial Lecture will be given b Professor George Kane, FBA (William Rand Kenan, Jr, Professor of English, Un versity of North Carolina, USA), entitled 'The Liberating Truth: The Concept o Integrity in Chaucer's Writings' at th University of London, Beveridge Hall, Senat House, Malet Street, London WC1 a 5.30 p.m. on Friday, 11 May 1979. Ad mission free, without ticket. Acadam Registrar.

ICA EVENTS, Nash House, The Mall, SW1 4 May 7.30 p.m. John Berger, Eric Hob bawm, Raymond Williams discuss 'Peas antry Today'. 8 May 7.30 p.m. Warre Kenton on 'The Cabalah Tradition'. 1 May 1 p.m. V. S. Pritchett on 'The Myt Makers'. 10 May 7 p.m. Cecil Collins o 'The Kingdom of the Invisible' includin his film 'The Eye of the Heart'. 75 930 6393.

ADLERIAN SOCIETY. 'Working wit Handicapped Children and Their Familie (informal talk illustrated with slides; dis cussion). Patricia Hammond, Head Teach Medecroft Opportunity Centre, Wincheste Tuesday 8 May 7.30 p.m., Communit Rooms, Millman Street (East Side), WC Visitors welcome 50p (students 25p).

CHATS AFLOAT (in NW8). Informal tal 'Humour and Buddhism' 19 May 3 p.m Few seats. No fee. Donation. J. Massero Flat 44, 5/7 Belsize Grove, NW3.

THE CHRIST is now emerging into publi work. Sharing, Justice, Brotherhood a the keynotes of His message. Talks b Benjamin Creme — Alice Bailey Teaching background: Friends' House, Euston Roa London NW1. Fri. 4 May, Wed. 9 Ma Thurs. 17, 7 p.m. Questions. Meditation Transmission. All welcome. 01-485 173

THEOSOPHY: S.a.e. for pamphlets, boo list, programme of activities. 'White Lotu Day' (H. P. B. Commemoration). Sun. 6 Ma 8 p.m. ULT, 62 Queen's Gdns, London W

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